Commentary

Volume Fifty-five, Number Six, June 1973

To China, With Love

Sheila K. Johnson

On the Rights of Minorities

Conor Cruise O'Brien

Rethinking Israel's Position
Shlomo Avineri

Marriage and Other Wifely Woes
Sonya Rudikoff

Kafka's True Will
Erich Heller

The Year of Europe
Walter Laqueur

The Jewish Vote (Again)
Milton Himmelfarb

Books in Review:
James Q. Wilson
Erich Isaac
Dorothy Rabinowitz
James Atlas
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Commentary

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Letters from Readers

Housing and the 70's

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his review of *The Seventies: Problems and Proposals*, edited by Irving Howe and Michael Harrington [Books in Review, March], Elliott Abrams, who was not very happy about the book as a whole, singled out for special critical mention our chapter, "What Do We Want Right Now: Legislative Proposals for Reform." He was most upset by our housing proposals. We had suggested that everyone be given the opportunity to own or share in the ownership of the housing in which he lives. We believe that ownership of housing should be limited to those who occupy the housing or to community institutions (except in the case of small, owner-occupied, multi-family dwellings). Legislation phasing ownership of rental units to tenants and to the community should be introduced, providing just compensation to landlords and realtors. Immediate authorization and funding should be provided to enable community institutions, including cooperatives or nonprofit or limited dividend companies, to acquire and operate the large number of residential structures presently abandoned.

Even COMMENTARY's reviewer ought to admit that this is an innovative proposal, in no way resembling efforts which the U.S. so far has made in the field of housing. (His chief complaint about our legislative proposals for the 70's was that they were simply the warmed-over proposals of the 60's.)

The business of providing housing for low- and moderate-income areas is no longer a good business, no longer economically viable, which explains why private investment money is not flowing into it. Every city has its blocks of abandoned buildings—many in good condition until they were abandoned. They are empty, and they will remain empty, because their tenants could not afford to pay the rents which their landlords had to have in order to maintain the buildings and make some kind of profit.

At present a built-in adversary relationship creates distrust between tenant and landlord—exacerbated when the landlord is white and the tenants are non-white. The tenant, in any case, has no particular incentive to look after the landlord's interests, and the landlord, in turn, cannot afford to be sentimental about his tenants; he is trapped by the economics of the situation: rising costs.

It is notable that among upper- and upper-middle-income groups the trend toward condominium living is accelerating. We are proposing to apply condominium economics to low- and middle-income housing. When tenants become owners, as in condominiums, their viewpoint shifts, affecting their motivation, as they must balance their needs and desires against maintenance and other costs. Many problems remain, but at least everybody is going in the same direction.

One other difference should be noted. Although people in low-income neighborhoods are poor, the high density of such neighborhoods means that money *is* there, and in considerable quantity. Approximately one third of the money in a low-income neighborhood goes into rent—and promptly goes *out* of the neighborhood, in the usual landlord-tenant relationship. When tenants become owners, more of the money circulates, at least for a time, within the neighborhood. . . .

In a more general criticism, the reviewer calls our legislative proposals a rehash of programs and proposals of the Great Society. True: in this chapter we *are* talking about the unfinished business of the 60's—and in some cases the 50's and the 40's as well. Mr. Abrams has fallen into a trap designed by President Nixon, who once more has proved that any statement, no matter how patently false, will be accepted as true if repeated often enough. In this case the myth is that the nation spent billions on New Frontier and Great Society programs—enormous chunks of money which have disappeared down the rathole of welfare-ism. The plain truth, of course, is that we have never yet committed the resources of the nation to any war on poverty of the same magnitude as, say, a Manhattan project or an Apollo program. Until we do so, we cannot say we have tried money. The nation was able to spend $25 to $35 billion per year in Vietnam, in an undeclared war in which U.S. interests

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were obscure, at best—more than we spent on education, for example, in ten years. To borrow a thought, funding vast programs to deal with our problems hasn't failed; it's just never been tried.

One last carping note: the reviewer likes the rest of our proposals (rehash and all) but complains that they do not "embody a uniquely 'socialist' view." He's right; they don't. They weren't supposed to. These are legislative proposals aimed at the U.S. Congress, steps to be taken now, in an imperfect world, while the central committee is trying, presumably, to design a better one.

LEON SHULL
STINA SANTIESTEVAN
Americans for Democratic Action
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Elliott Abrams . . . criticizes the housing recommendations given in *The Seventies: Problems and Proposals*. . . . It would seem, though, that Mr. Abrams's comments indicate a lack of knowledge on his part about subsidized housing programs in this country. He suggests that "the federal housing program has collapsed amid scandal." But if there is a "collapse" in federal housing programs, it is because this administration has decided to suspend all subsidized housing programs for eighteen months, not because the programs themselves are unworthy. There have been problems with subsidized housing programs in this country but there also have been significant successes, the most important of which is providing several million people with decent and adequate housing that otherwise would not be available on the private market. . . .

The reference to "scandals," it seems to me, reflects not on the subsidized housing mechanisms but on the management and administration of those federal programs. We did not end the federal involvement in housing mortgage insurance through FHA when we had the "608" scandals of the early 50's. We did not stop our federal highway program when scandals came to light in many states in the early days of that program.

Before the existing subsidized housing programs are abandoned, it would seem only reasonable to evaluate carefully these programs and hammer out new or revise existing programs so that we do not fall farther behind in meeting the needs of our low-income citizens. It should be emphasized that there has never been a reasonable level of funding in our subsidized housing programs to meet our needs.

EDWARD N. HELFELD
Housing and Redevelopment
Authority of the City of
Saint Paul
Saint Paul, Minnesota

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

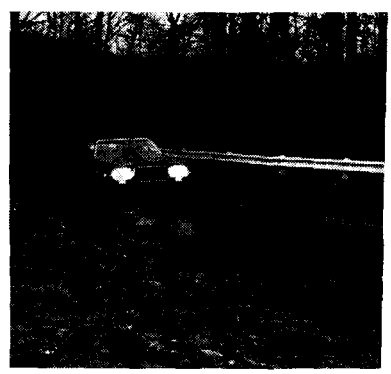
I find it interesting that Elliott Abrams should profess to be unable to understand why socialists continue to espouse the big-spending, bureaucratic programs of the 60's instead of, for example, income redistribution through direct payments. The reason (for socialists as well as for a broad liberal-Left range of opinion) is easily understandable in the context of what Irving Kristol terms the "embarrassingly vulgar" reality of the aspirations of the New Class. For, while income-support programs are egalitarian, they in no way promote the objective interests of the New Class. Their purpose and effect is to redistribute wealth from private individuals to other private individuals, not to the state and its bureaucracy.

In fact, it could be argued that a *genuine* redistribution of wealth and power in America would be as much anathema to the New Class as to more traditional centers of reaction. For—while generalizations may be unfair to some individuals—the protagonists of Left politics represent a counter-oligarchy. Admittedly, they do not think of themselves in this way; their intentions (at least their *conscious* intentions) are benign. They define their functions—planning, regulation of private interests, provision of social services—as synonymous with social justice, and in any given place and time these definitions may, in fact, be valid. But power remains the objective, and it should surprise no one that the accumulation of it in their own hands should remain the dominant feature of the agenda of a great many of those who profess to be working for a more just society.

JOHN MCADAMS
Columbus, Mississippi

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Elliott Abrams writes: "It is now a commonplace to state that the Great Society represented an attempt to solve social problems by throwing money at them and that it largely failed." Yet Michael



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Harrington, among others, has been . . . quite persuasive in knocking down this view. . . . His argument is that the money promised for the Great Society programs was never really delivered except in two areas—Medicaid and an increase in Social Security—which received wide support from moderate liberals. Harrington seems to be suggesting that money *on the scale* needed for real social reform won't be forthcoming until the Left can persuade moderate liberals that the money will be well used. As long as moderates are able to delude themselves into thinking that somehow the "money" approach was tried and it failed, then there is little hope for any practical program of social reform.

ROBERT CHAPPETTA
New York City

ELLIOTT ABRAMS writes:

The more Leon Shull and Stina Santiestevan explain their housing proposal, the less sense it makes. If they are suggesting merely that we aid people to own their own homes, this idea is far from innovative. It is embodied in sections 235 and 236 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, and it is precisely the scandals surrounding these programs which I had in mind when I criticized the federal housing mess. If they are actually suggesting that privately owned rental housing be prohibited by law and that *all* housing ownership be limited to occupants or community groups, then I stand corrected. Their proposal is not only "innovative," but positively astounding. To state but a few of the objections which jump to mind: The proposal is highly coercive and ignores the millions of people who prefer living in rental housing. It would presumably forbid further construction of rental units by private owners, thus drying up a significant source of new housing units. It would create disorder in the capital market while hundreds of billions of dollars in mortgages and loans had to be shifted around, and this again would undoubtedly lead to a decrease in new construction. Finally, it is not in any case clear that home ownership is a good idea for people with very low incomes, who may be unable to afford the repair and maintenance costs required. The idea of encouraging home ownership is not new, but the notion that this must be the sole federal housing program is startling in its inflexibility and lack of appreciation of the realities of the housing problem.

The ADA spokesmen do not analyze the successes or failures of the section 235 and 236 programs, nor of the federal housing effort in general. They simply present their plan, and both its immeasurable ramifications and staggering costs go undiscussed. I am therefore led to restate the questions I asked in my review: Where is the necessary appraisal of which programs have worked and which failed? Where, amid all the talk of priorities, is an evaluation of which programs are worthy of the political capital at one's disposal, which merely peripheral?

Nowhere in my review did I imply that major social problems could be solved without large expenditures of federal funds. If I thought that parsimony were a central virtue, I would most likely be a Republican, which I am not. What I do object to is the massive expenditure of funds on programs that are untested, unrealistic, or, worse, already clearly unsuccessful. And I do object to the notion that programs which were failures or partial failures at $10 billion, would uniformly have been successes if only their size had been doubled. It is true that not enough was spent on Great Society programs to solve all our social problems; but it is also true that quite enough was spent to prove that many of the programs were poorly designed and poorly implemented. Until liberals like these ADA spokesmen (and Robert Chappetta) realize and admit this, and stop harping on the need to spend more, Mr. Nixon and his associates will continue to win elections.

The ADA spokesmen are not to be criticized for submitting to Congress a set of proposals which are not "uniquely socialist." My point was that Mr. Howe and Mr. Harrington presented no legislative program which was socialist, but instead borrowed one intact from the liberals. One might infer from this that socialists have no legislative suggestions of their own which are politically realistic, and that is precisely the inference I drew.

Several of Edward N. Helfeld's points are well taken. The difficulties of the subsidized housing programs were largely the result of

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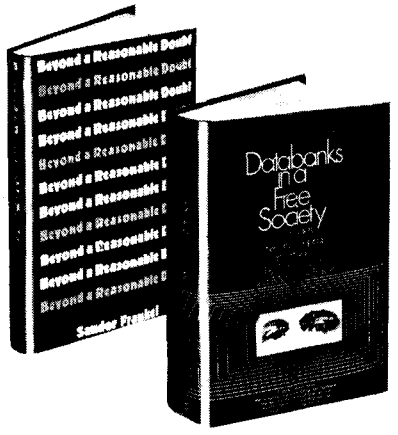

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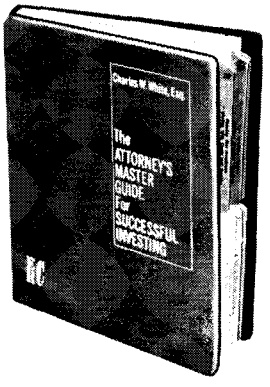

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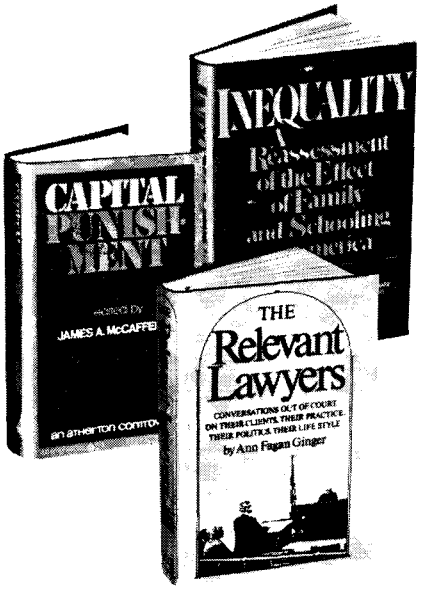
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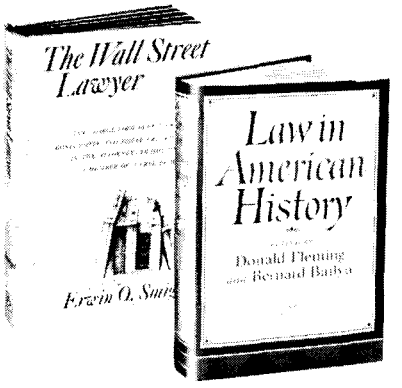

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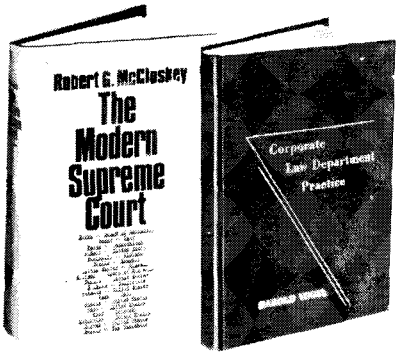

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poor management and administration. There were some more serious problems as well, however; for example, Anthony Downs has argued that the 235 home-ownership program should include a minimum-income requirement, excluding those who truly cannot meet maintenance costs and thus are likely to default on their mortgage payments. In any case, Mr. Helfeld is correct in saying that careful evaluation of new and existing programs is what is needed, and not the Nixonian freeze on all subsidy programs. And he is correct in saying that if we wish to provide good housing for all our citizens, expenditures on housing subsidies will surely have to rise.

I am in general agreement with John McAdams's suggestions as to the interest of the New Class in the growth of bureaucracy, but I think it unfair to go too far with this notion. For one thing, liberals and socialists may be interested in power, but certainly no more so than others along the political spectrum, who likewise "profess to be working for a more just society" and are usually doing just that. For another, an overly jaundiced view of others' motives may well lead to giving their proposals a less exhaustive or open-minded review than the proposals in fact deserve. I am sure Mr. McAdams would agree that policy proposals should stand or fall on their own merits, since the merits are entirely independent of the proponents' motives. To take a case in point, no one who knows Leon Shull or Stina Santiestevan, as I do, will ever doubt their commitment to a more just society; but even their closest friends can probably be persuaded that their housing proposal is an absolutely terrible idea.

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Foreign Policy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to respond to the questions posed in Adam B. Ulam's generous review of my book, *Peace in the Balance* [Books in Review, March].

Mr. Ulam asks for more particulars about those of our postwar policies and programs which, in my view, had failed.

About Vietnam, I thought I had made it clear that the military effort was for a long time misconceived and misdirected, and that Johnson should have followed Lincoln's example in dismissing generals and defense officials until he found men who could win the war, quickly. My central concern, however, was to examine the uncertainties about policy which kept the United States from pursuing the more vigorous military course so natural to our temperament.

With regard to the 1967 crisis in the Middle East, I expressed the conviction that it was a mistake on our part not to have used force to open the Strait of Tiran, in order to prevent the Six-Day War. In that connection, with regard to another point made by Mr. Ulam, the Johnson administration did indeed view the Middle East as a crisis situation from the fall of 1966. It merely instituted special procedures for 'round-the-clock crisis management in the spring of 1967.

Similarly, I criticized our failure to move promptly at the end of World War II (while we still had a nuclear monopoly) to insist on free elections in Eastern Europe, as promised at Yalta and Potsdam, and to prevent the takeover of Czechoslovakia in 1948.

The question of error in the execution of policy may define a difference between Mr. Ulam and me, at least in temperament. I expect little of people, and therefore am often pleasantly surprised. Clearly, he expects a great deal of men, and is therefore indignant when they fall short. He suggests that I am "too ready" to treat good intentions as an excuse for mistakes. Not at all. I do, however, accept the inevitability of error in the conduct of affairs more philosophically than he does. Even under the best of circumstances, and with the wisest and most incisive of leaders, the most we can hope for is a batting average good enough to win the game. It is too

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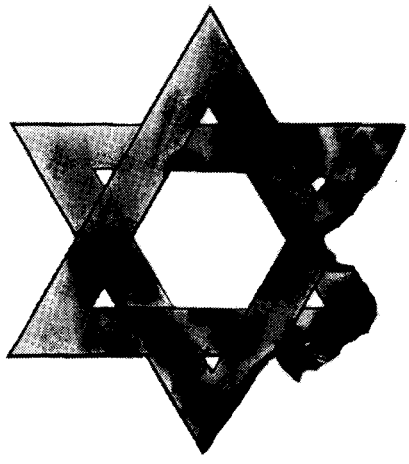

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much to expect more as earnest men respond to inchoate dangers, often dimly perceived.

Perhaps this difference between Mr. Ulam and me accounts for his remark that "most people, including even the more sensible of those Mr. Rostow castigates, would grant that the general line of postwar American policy has been the only one that the United States, in view of its international position and the character of American society, could pursue." Having painfully examined the literature, I can assure Mr. Ulam that this is not the case. That is why I wrote the book I did, rather than the one he would have preferred—an attempt to clarify what foreign policy is for, not a critical and detailed examination of the way it has been conducted.

EUGENE V. ROSTOW
Yale University Law School
New Haven, Connecticut

ADAM B. ULAM writes:

I continue to believe that what we need above all is more facts. If a "critical and detailed examination of the way" our foreign policy has been conducted is not forthcoming, all of us, the historians as well as the general public, will be left with little in the way of information, except for those titillating gossip chronicles and moralistic diatribes, and it does not matter whether the latter have as their theme "we are guilty" or "we meant well." And short of a hard, factual account by those in the position to know, how can we tell whether errors in the formulation and execution of our foreign policy were avoidable, whether they sprang from the structure of the decision-making process, the condition of our society, or what? This brings me to another of Eugene V. Rostow's points: the need to clear away the confusion about the general character of U.S. policy. There always have been, and unfortunately always will be, people who write nonsense, whether well-meant or otherwise. But such nonsense becomes fashionable, hence harmful, only when the general public feels it is not given the facts the citizens of a democracy are entitled to know.

The Photographer's Art

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is good to see photography being taken seriously in your pages, but Richard Schickel's "The Art of Diane Arbus" [March], interesting as it is, seems to me seriously misleading in certain ways. Since photography is not only an art but, when rightly apprehended, one of the most humane of the arts, this seems to me a matter of some importance.

Mr. Schickel's division of photography into "two major traditions. . . , the salon tradition . . . [and] photo-journalism," is either simply untrue or else involves a remarkable divergence from what I had always assumed was the informed consensus. When he says, "About the former tradition, the less said the better. . . ," it is hard to believe that he can be referring to the work of artists like Eugene Atget, Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand, Edward Weston, Harry Callahan, and others. But it is equally hard to believe that if he knew their work and took it seriously, he could have spoken as he did or attributed the kind of breakthrough importance to Arbus that he did. The actuality is more interesting than that.

Unfortunately I have been able to see only one or two examples of the work of Lisette Model, Arbus's teacher. But in any case it is obvious that a substantial number of the pictures in the Arbus book are essentially developments of work done by Robert Frank in his very influential *The Americans* (ca. 1958), just as Frank's work in turn represented a development not only of work by Henri Cartier-Bresson and, I would guess, Dorothea Lange but also of work in Walker Evans's *American Photographs* (1938), which in its turn involved a development of work in *Atget, Photographe de Paris* (1930), edited by Berenice Abbott. Arbus was obviously also familiar with Evans's and Atget's work herself, as well as with the austere frontality of Strand's portraiture and the experiments with "snapshot" composition of Callahan. In saying all this I am making approving, not adverse, judgments. I am pointing to a tradition, a line of development, in which intelligent and very gifted photographers learned from predecessors and used their understanding to produce images that were still brilliantly their own. . . .

Arbus was not in the least an eccentric genius who "turned her back on professionalism, on all the established notions of what constituted a proper aesthetic for a

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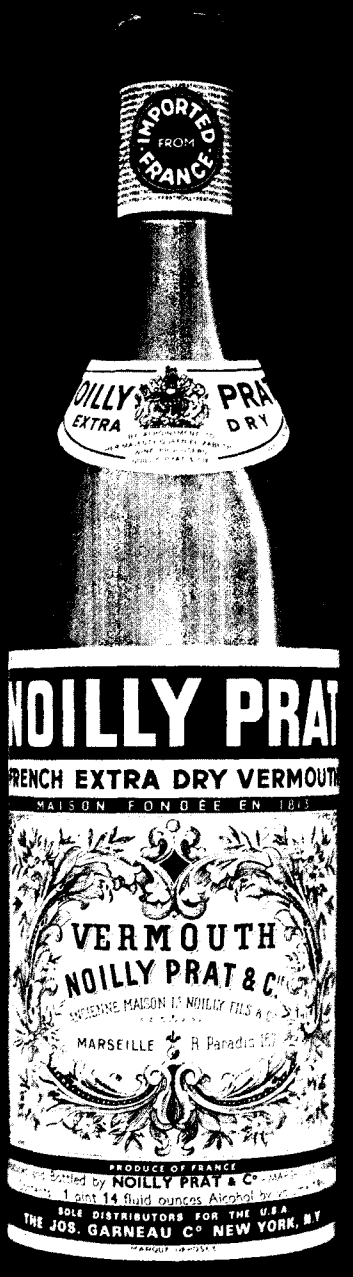

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serious photographer. . . , her style . . . no style in the conventional sense, her technique no technique at all." She was a highly sophisticated craftsman, with a brilliant sense of composition and, if the evidence of the book is reliable, a keen interest in printing, at times to the point of mannerism. There are in fact fewer than fifteen pictures in the book that answer to Mr. Schickel's use of the term "snapshot." And even though among them are most of the beautiful and very moving pictures of the mentally defective, it would be a woeful mistake to see pictures like these—so easy to mimic formally and so impossible to follow in terms of feeling—as being the "real" contribution of Arbus and the one that young photographers should try to emulate.

I will add that it is not, I think, a mere interest in the macabre that has led people to see Arbus as the portraitist of the eccentric. Dominant in the book, to my eyes at least, are those images of dwarfs and witches and magic-workers and giants and princesses and enchanted castles that embody so vividly the fairy-tale terrors and excitements of an imaginative childhood. In contrast, the photographs of "normal" people seem to me, *pace* Mr. Schickel, to be informed for the most part by a barely concealed contempt for, and perhaps fear of, people who *think* they are being interestingly different but who are in fact merely ugly and tatty. To see what respecting the dignity of ordinary people really looks like, Mr. Schickel's readers might consider the work of artists like Atget, Strand, Evans, and Lange. And I would surmise that part of Arbus's tragedy was that she was not sufficiently interested in social contexts, in the way that those others were, or as Frank was, to be able to bridge the gap between the childhood wonder of the extraordinary and the banality of the everyday and to see the wonderful *in* the ordinary, except very occasionally. This may make her more our contemporary in some ways. But it does not, in my opinion, make her the greater artist. It should continue to be kept in mind, moreover, that she took her own life, and that it is not critically naive in such cases to keep alert to divisions and disharmonies in an artist's work indicative of excessive strains.

However, my main concern . . . is with the art and craft of photography. Arbus in a substantial number of her photographs was a brilliant and moving artist whose work will last as long as photography does. But to understand both her distinction and her limitations entails seeing her place in a complex tradition, one of the most important traditions in photography, a tradition that is a great deal more than "documentary," though some documentary photographers belong in it. She was not a pseudo-primitive or a semi-conceptualist. She was a traditional artist, just like the other figures I have named, and, like them, she was an artist deeply interested in and respectful toward her craft. And people who believe that photography is indeed, in Mr. Schickel's words, "a full-fledged artistic medium" might do well to keep insisting that a deep respect for craftsmanship and a steady interest in what can be learned from others and passed on to others are probably, especially these days, irreplaceable features in what makes an art truly humane.

JOHN FRASER
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

RICHARD SCHICKEL writes:

John Fraser's letter is typical of the kind of soft-focus humanism that has retarded the growth of intelligent critical discussion of photography for so many years, and against which Diane Arbus spoke out so forcefully.

Let me dispose of two minor matters quickly. For convenience's sake I divided photography into two *major* traditions. Obviously *there are many more sub-traditions* in photography, but I believe that for purposes of a brief discussion, most of them can be subsumed by these two categories. Those that can't be—industrial, fashion, and advertising photography, for example—are hardly worth mentioning in an essay devoted to photography as an art. As for the salon tradition, I really don't much like it, hence my rather offhand dismissal of it. I readily recognize the historical importance of the names Mr. Fraser lists, but I find their work rather academic and sterile, which may or may not be a defect in me. Anyway, I didn't feel it was very germane to the work at hand—Diane Arbus's. I quite agree with Mr. Fraser that she was "a highly sophisticated craftsman. . . ," etc. In-

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deed, I don't see how anyone reading my article with the slightest care could think I thought otherwise. Nevertheless, I must insist that it is more interesting and profitable to see Mrs. Arbus as an artist who consciously and deliberately rejected most of the work that had gone before her than it is to shoehorn her into some imaginary tradition or other. Indeed, it seems to me that the body of Mr. Fraser's letter proves my point.

Robert Frank, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Dorothea Lange, and Walker Evans all took superb portraits, of course, but they are, I think, very different, one from the other, in technique and intention, and farther still from Mrs. Arbus. For instance, the very title of Robert Frank's book, *The Americans,* to which Mr. Fraser refers, implies a search for the typical and implies, as well, an attempt at social commentary. In the compilation of remarks that stand as an introduction to the present volume, Mrs. Arbus specifically rejected the search for the typical as a worthwhile goal for the photographer and I don't think she ever saw her people as representatives of the American spirit, mood, mind, or what have you. Her search was always for the unique and her style tended to emphasize, above all else, the singularity of her subjects. As for Cartier-Bresson, one of his collections was entitled *The Decisive Moment* and that, too, implies a goal quite different from Mrs. Arbus's. He tended to take his subjects unaware, catching their expressions at the highest pitch of whatever drama was preoccupying them (and distracting attention from his lens). It is a technique as distant as one can imagine from that employed by Mrs. Arbus. Lange and Evans were, for the most part, formalists and one need only glance at the way they employed light to model their subjects' features to see the difference between what they were up to and what Arbus, with her flat, artless lighting, was attempting. Indeed, her associate, Marvin Israel, recently pointed out to me that in her last years Mrs. Arbus was very interested in old-fashioned newspaper photography, the curiously revealing effects that could be obtained with a crude flash gun. Restudying her work, I can see the results of this interest and am glad to acknowledge Mr. Israel's point. But it only serves to separate her further from the people with whom Mr. Fraser wants to associate her.

Single-flash photography, the bulb popping right in the subject's face, very often blacks out the background entirely, isolating him from the "social context" that means more to Mr. Fraser (at least in photography) than it does to me. It has always seemed to me that the documentarians have overstressed it. It offers an easy explanation for the tragedies they saw in the faces they photographed. By contrast, Diane Arbus's people are very much on their own, isolated, in her compositions. They are the victims not so much of a specific time or place, but of the larger tragedy that victimizes everyone, everywhere, in all ages. They are, in short, the victims of life. You can't palm off what you see in their faces on, let us say, social injustice or racial intolerance or some other malfunctioning of the system any more than you palm off what you see in a painting by Goya on the corruption of the 18th-century Spanish monarchy. Contrary to Mr. Fraser, I think her self-imposed limits in lighting and composition made Diane Arbus a greater artist—or at least a more original one—than the others he names. She was deliberately filtering out the easy symbols, the little aids to quick study that are present in so much photography, focusing her lens, her consciousness (and through it, ours) on the enigmatic, the unknowable. That is why one returns so often, so profoundly attentive, to her work. Indeed, one might point out that there is nothing in those photographs as facile as Mr. Fraser's gratuitous speculation that "part of her tragedy was that she was not sufficiently interested in social contexts." Who knows what formed her tragedy? And how dare he impute it to so banal a cause as that? But then, we apparently have very different ideas of what constitutes "respect" for "the dignity of ordinary people." His seems to me imaginatively limited and rather sentimental. Mine—and perhaps Mrs. Arbus's—undoubtedly seems to him harsh, even cruel. But that is one of those matters that seems to me unarguable.

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The Autistic Child

To the Editor of Commentary:

It is discouraging to find that it is possible to read the sensitive account of childhood autism by Sonya Rudikoff, "Why Some Children Don't Speak" [October 1972], and still maintain, as Hildegard Peplau does [Letters from Readers, January], that "one major cause of autism is the sustained, yet often unrecognized, anxiety experienced daily by significant persons in the child's environment; this extremely high anxiety is communicated to and experienced by the child. . . . Early signs of autism (often overlooked) are signals of distress within the family system, including high levels of anxiety. All of the published accounts cited by Sonya Rudikoff give ample evidence to support this inference."

Since my book *The Siege* is one of those published accounts, I would like to repudiate this inference. It may be considered progress that the symptomatology of the autistic child is now attributed to his parents' anxiety rather than to their rejection, and that autism is no longer explained (as it was by Bruno Bettelheim as recently as 1967) as a consequence of the child's realization that his mother desired his death. If parents must be implicated in the etiology of their child's affliction, anxiety is perhaps preferable to the death wish. But since Dr. Leo Kanner, who first noted the syndrome of early infantile autism and named it, has expressly stated that he considers autism an innate condition, and Dr. Edward Ritvo, professor of psychiatry at UCLA, has told parents, "You cannot cause an autistic child," and since the weight of contemporary psychiatric opinion is strongly in favor of a biological explanation for this mentally and emotionally crippling affliction, it would be nice if those who offer us therapy for our anxiety would recognize that although every family with an autistic child suffers agonies of anxiety, that anxiety is the result, not the cause, of their child's autism. For a therapist to fail to acknowledge this is to substitute salt for salve, and to risk compounding family anxiety and family grief with family rage. None of these emotions is conducive to the dogged, firm action the family must daily and hourly undertake if they are to help their gravely handicapped child toward such development as he is capable of. As Josh Greenfeld points out in *A Child Called Noah,* what families need is not therapy for their anxiety, but services for their child. If the mental-health professions can offer programs which help the child, they will find that for the vast majority of parents, irritation will give way to gratitude, and anxiety will take care of itself.

Clara Claiborne Park
Williamstown, Massachusetts

Masses and Elites

To the Editor of Commentary:

Jeane Kirkpatrick tells us in "The Revolt of the Masses" [February] that in the recent Presidential election, Richard Nixon was "cast as leader of the masses" and George McGovern was perceived as "the spokesman of an embattled revolutionary elite." Since she appears to have derived her title from Ortega y Gasset's famous essay, the following lines from Ortega may be of interest, if not of relevance, to our Presidential election: "As they say in the United States: 'to be different is to be indecent.' The mass crushes beneath it everything that is different, everything that is excellent, individual, qualified, and select. Anybody who is not like everybody, who does not think like everybody, runs the risk of being eliminated." By "mass," Ortega means not simply "the working masses" but rather the average man.

Norman P. Sacks
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin

Anti-Semitism, Old & New

To the Editor of Commentary:

In connection with "The Greeks, The Romans & Captain Dreyfus" [February], I would like to add the following observations to Milton Himmelfarb's statement that "if we had been living in France or Germany eighty years ago, we would have been followers of Darmesteter, Reinach, and [Hermann] Cohen." . . . Since 1791 the Charter of Emancipation, developed by the French Revolution, has been a model for all Jewish communities aspiring toward liberty. But there are many earlier precedents as well: in 597 B.C.E., for example, the letter of Jeremiah to the Babylonian exiles: "Build ye houses and dwell in them. . . . Take ye wives and beget sons and daughters. . . . And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof, ye shall have peace" (29:4-7). Seven centuries later there is the aphorism of Rabbi Samuel: "The law of the land [in which Jews live] is binding" (Gittin 10b). This was something more than a juridical principle which allowed for a resolution of conflicting laws; it was a principle of political conduct, a compromise with the state.

One cannot therefore isolate a period of twenty years (1894-1914) and pass judgment on the conduct of Jews of this epoch without taking into account that which went before and made the process inevitable. Nor can one pass judgment based on what we know from subsequent historical experience. . . .

The day will come soon enough when we will be ironical about certain assertions of modern thinkers, such as: the centrality of Israel (as if the Diaspora—80 per cent of the Jewish people—had no historical development); the innocence of Israel (as if any state, even Israel, could be innocent); the messianic nature of the unification of Jerusalem (as if the conquests of 1967, in spite of everything, had a spiritual significance); the amalgam of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism (which has from the beginning constituted blackmail, intimidation, and intellectual deception); the collective responsibility of the German people (when we practice the same thing in the State of Israel in destroying Arab houses). . . .

As for the German-Jewish, Franco-Jewish, or Marxist-Jewish messianism of "non-Jewish Jews," one could formulate the following rule: Jews made a pathetic effort at integration (going as far as sublimation) in all countries where, whether rightly or wrongly, the surrounding culture appeared to have attained a higher level (the United States, France, Germany, Italy, England); but they did not assimilate in the contrary cases (as in Latin America, where the Jews live in a semi-colonial situation). From this perspective, the messianism of a Darmesteter and of a Trotsky constitutes only the ultimate expression of this spirit.

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The lesson the sociologist and the historian can draw from the Jewish past is a lesson of forbearance: faith and treason, courage and cowardice, martyrdom and Marranism, particularism and universalism—all of these are manifestations of the complexity of the Jewish condition for the past two millennia. One might ask about one or another part of the past: could it . . . have been different? In the clarity of his logic Machiavelli answered: "It was necessary that Moses find the people of Israel in Egypt oppressed by the Egyptians so that they would be disposed to follow him out of slavery." Is this so far from Marxist determinism? Jews have been placed in a narrow margin of freedom and mobility, and it is within this margin that all Jewish efforts at historical creativity have taken place.

W. Rabi

Besancon, France

To the Editor of Commentary:

Perhaps I am unjustly faulting Milton Himmelfarb when I accuse him of crediting Christian texts with not being "overwhelmingly richer" in anti-Semitism than (pre-Christian) pagan texts. There is simply no comparison.

All the Christian anti-Semitic literature that "derives from and depends upon earlier pagan literature" (such as Manetho's slander that the Egyptians expelled the Jews because they were lepers) cannot, I submit, compare in "richness" with the single Christian charge of deicide, a charge which constituted the prime incitement to Jew-killing throughout 1500 years! That Manetho's slander was repeated in Communist literature but not in Christian texts reflects no credit on the Christians. After all, the Exodus story is a part of the Christian Bible by expropriation, and to the Church the Exodus story "mysteriously" foreshadows the march of the New People of God to the Promised Land of Christianity! As for Apion's claim that "the Jews captured a Greek every year, sacrificed him to their God, and then feasted on his entrails" constituting the "origin of that slander of ritual murder which was to result in the shedding of so much innocent blood in the Middle Ages"—I just wonder. I rather believe that the frightful Christian blood libels against Jews were inspired by the 3rd-century Church historian Eusebius, who insisted that the Jews of every community would crucify a Christian each year at Purim to show their hate for Jesus. It is true, as Mr. Himmelfarb notes, that Christians themselves were not spared the ritual-murder slander, but this resulted from their charging one of their own "heretical" sects (Montanists) with mixing the blood of a year-old infant with the bread of the Eucharist (the very charge later directed at the Jews!).

Let us not equate peevish pagan pecking at the Jews with the fierceness of Christian Jew-hatred, which brought the late Pope John XXIII to utter the prayer: "Forgive us for crucifying Thee a second time in their [the Jews'] flesh."

Paul Kaplowitz

Washington, D.C.

To the Editor of Commentary:

Having recently finished research on the post-Revolutionary years in France, 1796-1873 (treating the times of Joseph Salvador, a historian of Jewish antiquity who found it his duty to show the historical Jewish contribution to the French Revolution), I was most impressed with Milton Himmelfarb's article. It truly describes, in the author's words, how "the intelligent and learned find intelligent and learned pretexts for asserting as true what they wish were true. They easily fool themselves and everyone else who wishes to be fooled." However, we must be very careful in passing judgment on men like Darmesteter, Reinach, Cohen, and their intellectual counterparts throughout the history of the Jews in the Diaspora before the Holocaust, since these men were not only relying on "learned pretexts" but were the children of their times. . . . We today . . . have the duty to pass judgment on ourselves, and never to allow ourselves to be swept up in a frenzy of ideological comparison-making as post-witnesses of Auschwitz. . . .

Since 1945, though we may be Diaspora Jews geographically, we have no right to be so in time. We are the fortunate descendants not of progress or even existence but of the duration of civilization (post-1945). As these descendants, we are able to see great ages of men who not only represented their times but blended into them, so that the men and their times became one. It is not that we are more advanced, but that it was given to us to survive. . . .

To understand the past. . . , let us never forget that today was not even a conceivable tomorrow for those of yesterday.

Michael Shore

Dropsie University

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To the Editor of Commentary:

I would like to submit some additions to Milton Himmelfarb's very pertinent article. . . . Tacitus, in his Historiae, devotes a whole chapter to the Jews as troublesome Roman subjects, in which he offers still other fantastic myths about the Jews, all taken from Apion (who, incidentally, was not a Greek, but also a Hellenized Egyptian priest). The story about the ass has even deeper implications. When Titus captured Jerusalem in 70, he was puzzled by the fact that the Jews refused to let the Roman soldiers enter the innermost sanctum of the Temple where the Ark of the Covenant was. The Romans . . . readily accepted the explanation that the Jews had hidden there their holy animal which was an ass. Tacitus believed the story and reported it. . . . But Plutarch went even farther. He explained that the Jews were forbidden to eat pork because the *swine* was worshipped by the Jews as their *god*!

As for modern times, in connection with Mr. Himmelfarb's description of "Franco-Judaism" and "German-Judaism," let me cite some other examples. In Germany, we have the great Jewish industrialist and statesman Walther Rathenau, who was assassinated in 1922. In 1896 Rathenau published in the magazine *Die Zukunft* edited by Maximilian Harden, another super-assimilationist, an article titled "Hear, O Israel" in which he beseeched the German Jews to give up their Jewish traits and to become like the other Germans in looks and behavior, keeping only a small token of religious Jewishness. Going back to Moses Mendelssohn, the champion of Jewish Emancipation in Germany, we see a most paradoxical occurrence: the so-called "emancipation" was so frail that Mendelssohn's own children and grandchildren and, with them, a great many other Jewish intellectuals and businessmen, felt obliged to convert to Christianity. Among those early converts was the eminent poet Heinrich Heine, who

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OUR COUNTRY'S GASOLINE SHORTAGE

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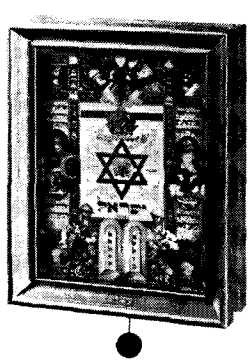

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claimed that baptism was the "admission ticket to European civilization". . . . Perhaps the most gripping case of the paradoxical behavior of Franco-Judaism is that of Edmond de Rothschild who devoted his strongest efforts to providing a home for the oppressed Eastern European Jews in Palestine and, at the same time, was violently anti-Zionist in regard to French Jewry. He used to say: "A Zionist is an American Jew who gives money to an English Jew in order to bring a Polish Jew to Palestine." . . .

HENRY WALTER BRANN
Takoma Park, Maryland

Irony & the Irish

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I wish to make two comments on Robert W. Greene's gracious review of my book, *That Most Distressful Nation: The Taming of the American Irish* [Books in Review, April].

The first has to do with a matter of statistical fact: like most other American-Irish intellectuals, Mr. Greene simply cannot believe in the economic success of his own kind. In fact, a recent NORC monograph, *The Demography of Religio-Ethnic Identification*, establishes beyond all doubt that in both income and education the Irish are second only to Jews and ahead of British-Americans—even in the big cities in the North where the Irish are concentrated.

The other point is much more difficult to make. How does one Irishman say to another, "You've missed my irony"? How does one say, "Lamenting the end of everything is an old Irish trait and simply cannot be taken literally"? If the irony has been missed, it was rotten irony.

But at the risk of committing the capital sin of explaining irony, let me say that I don't believe for a minute that the American Irish have lost their soul or that the wild poetry of bog and the hill has been socialized out of us. What Mr. Greene thinks is schizoid (to use his word) is ironic—however inept my irony may have been.

I suggested in the beginning of the book that there was a double theme: that the Irish had become like everyone else and that the hell they had. But perhaps Mr. Greene was so taken with Ambassador Moynihan's introduction that he didn't have time to read mine. I guess I can understand that. I thought I had signaled my real meaning in the last sentence of the book. I quoted Nancy McCready's "Lullaby for Liam" (as fierce a testament of Gaelic fire as I ever hope to hear), and concluded, "Maybe the Irish haven't been tamed at all!"

ANDREW M. GREELEY
Center for the Study of
American Pluralism
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

ROBERT W. GREENE writes:

In my review of Father Greeley's book on the American Irish, I expressed essentially three criticisms. I deplored first of all the absence of a section on Irish-American history; secondly, the author's failure to explore the possible reasons for his own typically Irish ambivalence about a central concern of his book, success; and thirdly, his not relating the subject of his book to the new ethnicity and thus his leaving his study in a scholarly and social vacuum. At no point in his letter does Father Greeley address himself to these rather basic criticisms.

Regarding the first of the two points he does raise: How is economic success to be determined? According to income and education alone, as Father Greeley implies? To mention just one other rather obvious consideration—the more children one has, the more income one needs for economic success.

As for his other objection, where does one draw the line between delightful, illuminating irony or paradox and the dead end of self-contradiction? Father Greeley appears not to have the faintest notion. (His few assertions to the contrary notwithstanding, the overall tone and substance of his book are those of a lament or an elegy, especially in the closing chapters.) One wishes Father Greeley would leave off straining after a cleverness and an "Irishness" that seem beyond his reach and that are irrelevant to the important work he is doing.

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To China, With Love

Sheila K. Johnson

"THRONGING the streets in Canton and bugging pedestrians to distraction was once the most scabrous passel of beggars this side of Calcutta. There are no beggars now. None. . . . Rickshas are gone . . . [but] if there are—as alleged—six hundred million people in the Middle Kingdom, then there are at least that many bikes, with all of them in action along about seven in the morning on Canton's main stem. . . . The local hospital in Canton is as modern an institution as could be found in New York, London, or anywhere. . . . Doctors are produced after three years of medical training. There are also great numbers of medical functionaries called by a phrase that translates into 'barefoot doctor,' pretty much what are called 'para-medicals' in the Western world. . . . I presented myself to the acupuncturist. My problem [a sore hip] was explained through an interpreter. I was placed prone on a surgical table and the doctor—an intent 30-year-old type with thick-thick glasses—probed my sitting department with his finger ends."

These descriptions all appeared in a series of five articles published on the front pages of the San Francisco *Examiner,* June 12-16, 1972, by Robert Patterson, a reporter who was last in China during the late 1930's. Mr. Patterson's language may have struck some of his readers as a little slangy—no doubt one reporter's attempt to jazz up what were already familiar observations—but otherwise his reports were certainly no more skeptical or uncritical than many published elsewhere by the growing tide of Americans (more than 1,000 since President Nixon's trip in February 1972) who have visited Communist China. There was only one small defect in Mr. Patterson's articles: in August 1972, an enterprising journalist from San Francisco's rival newspaper, the *Chronicle,* discovered that Mr. Patterson had, in fact, not been granted a visa to China and that he had filed his first-hand reports from the comfort of a Hong Kong hotel room.

I raise this case not to embarrass Mr. Patterson, who was summarily fired by his newspaper, but to ask whether his easily perpetrated hoax does not contain a moral for the consumer of other, genuine reports by visitors to Communist China. What, precisely, is it that this endless flow of books and articles has to tell us, aside from noting that there are no flies or dogs in China today, that beggars are gone, the streets clean, the fields tilled, the peasants well-fed, and the children looked-after—all impressive, but hardly news.* The fact is that beyond these surface observations, most visitors are offering us a heady mixture of their personal reactions and enthusiasms. James Reston, for instance, seems to have found in China the perfect vehicle for his nostalgia. After describing the Chinese as "engaged in one vast cooperative barn-raising," he goes on to observe that "they do it against a background of sights and sounds that tend to make Americans outrageously nostalgic and even sentimental. For example, they have plain old-fashioned steam-engine railroads—what Tom Wicker would call the real thing—with big red wheels and red cow catchers, and engines that pant and snort in the station and run with a red glow through the night, and dining cars where the cook comes back and negotiates your dinner, and compartments with fans and lace antimacassars on the seats, and long lonely whistles that trouble your sleep." Even the normally tough-minded Barbara Tuchman is moved to note at one point: "One could almost indulge in the dream that the Chinese might close themselves off from advancing history, as the last emperors tried vainly to do, and having got rid of the oppression of landlords and taxes and the cruelty of real want, might re-

SHEILA K. JOHNSON is a journalist and anthropologist who has lived in Hong Kong and Japan and whose work has been published in the New York *Times Magazine* and elsewhere. Mrs. Johnson's article, "A Look at Margaret Mead," appeared in our March number.

* See, for example, Joseph Alsop in the New York *Times Magazine,* March 11 and 18, 1973; John K. Galbraith, *A China Passage,* Houghton-Mifflin, 143 pp. $5.95; Arthur Galston in *Natural History,* October, November 1972; Wassily Leontief in the *Atlantic,* March 1973; Neville Maxwell in the *American Scholar,* Autumn 1972; Jonathan Mirsky in *Saturday Review of the Society,* July 1, 1972; *The New York Times Report from Red China,* Avon, 367 pp., $1.95 (paper); *The President's Trip to China,* Bantam, 159 pp., $1.50 (paper); Harrison E. Salisbury, *To Peking —And Beyond,* Quadrangle, 308 pp., $7.95; Ross Terrill, *800,000,000: The Real China,* Delta, 250 pp., $2.45 (paper); Jan C. Ting, *An American in China,* Paperback Library, 190 pp., 95¢ (paper); and Barbara W. Tuchman, *Notes from China,* Collier, 112 pp., $1.25 (paper).

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main, despite the hard life, an agricultural people, both for the world's sake and their own. It somehow suits them."

Other visitors evidently see in China a perfect example of the well-planned, well-run socialist society that eluded them in Russia. Writes Harrison Salisbury: "It seemed to me that Russia had lost the spark of its Revolution. That it had been overtaken by materialism. The young people chased Western fads like butterflies—the latest song, the latest dance, the latest style. Hippie clothing. Hippie haircuts. Drugs. They were trying to ape the Western drug culture. It was hard to see what remnants of the Revolution were left. Soviet foreign policy differed hardly an iota from Czarist foreign policy. I could not but feel that when the Chinese called the Soviet rulers the 'new Czars' they had touched a very elemental truth. But in China, there was something new. I agreed with those who said that the greatest change in China was in the spirit of the people." And Joseph Alsop notes: "In Moscow, the traveler can rarely get a decent meal, but if he does manage this miracle, he generally has to wait two hours for it to materialize. In Peking, too, all the restaurants are now state-owned and run by the Commerce Bureaus. . . . Yet you can drop into the least promising-looking 'popular restaurant' in Peking, full of working people paying the equivalent of 30 cents for a simple luncheon or dinner, and you get a meal that is promptly and courteously served, perfectly delicious and so cheap the bargain adds to the enjoyment."

When not engaged in making invidious comparisons between China and the Soviet Union, some visitors delight in pointing out how much better China is run than the United States or other capitalist societies. Wassily Leontief was so inspired by the large, neat fields of the communes that he contrasts them to the messy villages and fields of Hong Kong's New Territories, which he describes as "typical examples of the rural squalor one is accustomed to seeing in India and Puerto Rico, or closer to home, in poor backward areas of the old South." (Actually, these New Territories villages are extraordinarily prosperous, most of the farmers having turned their rice paddies into truck farms, orchards, and fish hatcheries to supply the urban markets of Hong Kong.) John K. Galbraith notes that in China "medicines have become very cheap. Common antibiotics are available without prescription. Our highly organized extortion being absent, their cost is nominal. The Pill is free. Frank [Tobin] said, 'It's too bad Estes Kefauver [who made cheaper drugs a crusade] never lived to get to China.'" Still another group of economists is asked by a barefoot doctor to describe medical care in the United States and responds with a recital about "long medical training; not enough medical people to serve the people; charging high prices; emergency treatment without prevention; crisis in rural areas especially; most doctors are in big cities; few women MD's, primarily [doing] only 'women's work' of obstetrics/gynecology or pediatrics; male nurses called 'sissies'; social diseases rampant [i.e.,] VD, drug addiction, environmental-respiratory ailments, lead poisoning." The barefoot doctor is so shocked that she comments, "This account of U.S. medicine today reminds us of Chinese medicine before Liberation!"

Finally, still other visitors to China seem to be overcome by a new-found sense of revolutionary camaraderie. For example, Professor Arthur Galston, a biologist at Yale who together with his wife and daughter spent a few weeks working on a commune, writes that "Our reaction to this hard work regimen surprises us. We are exhilarated by it; we enjoy working together with a group engaged in a mutual, productive effort. We find our appreciation for small things, like tomatoes and cucumbers, heightened by our familiarity with the problems associated with their production. We also feel that the distressing problems of the world, in which we were so recently immersed, have receded and that what is really important is getting the wheat harvested before the rains come, getting the vegetables irrigated before the drought damages them, and increasing the welfare and happiness of our friends on the commune."

II

WHAT is one to make of this sudden burst of enthusiasm for China? David Caute, in his recent book *The Fellow-Travelers: A Postscript to the Enlightenment,** has explored the similar wave of euphoric visitors' reports that came out of the Soviet Union during the 1920's and 30's. He attributes the visitors' admiration for Soviet social planning and their readiness to ignore purges, forced labor, and the political control of all aspects of the society to their infatuation with the ideals of the Enlightenment: "It signified a return to the 18th-century vision of a rational, educated, and scientific society based on the maximization of resources and the steady improvement (if not perfection) of human nature as visualized by objective, unprejudiced brains." However, Caute also notes that most of these enthusiasts for Russia were true believers in the doctrine of socialism in one country—that is, a country other than their own. Thus Lincoln Steffens, while comfortably ensconced on the Riviera, wrote that "I am for them to the last drop, I am a patriot for Russia; the future is there. . . . But I don't want to live there. It is too much like serving in an army at war with no mercy for the weak." In a similar

* Macmillan, 433 pp., $8.95.

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vein, John K. Galbraith recently pronounced that "The Chinese economy isn't the American or the European future. But it is the Chinese future. And let there be no doubt: For the Chinese, it works." Caute calls this fellow-traveling, which he defines as "commitment *at a distance* which is not only geographical but also emotional and intellectual . . . remote-control radicalism."

It would, of course, be unfair to label all current visitors to China as fellow-travelers, for their reactions are often highly personal and complex. This is particularly true of Chinese-Americans, who constitute the largest and most knowledgeable group of current visitors to China but who are almost never heard from in the mass media. There are various reasons for their silence. Some have gone primarily with business interests in mind: if trade with the mainland is to be resumed they hope to be among the first to import foodstuffs, antiques, and handicrafts. Others have gone to see relatives and are unwilling to air publicly what these relatives may have said to them, both for fear of harming them and because they themselves may wish to pay a return visit. Still other, often older, Chinese-Americans come away tongue-tied as a result of their ambivalence toward the new China. On the one hand, they are impressed: things look so much better than they did during the Civil War, when most of them left. On the other hand, there are many disquieting signs, such as the reticence or "unavailability" of their former friends, usually intellectuals or members of the "bourgeois" class. Sometimes Chinese-American reactions to the new China are also tinged by *schadenfreude*. According to one (possibly apocryphal) story, a haughty professor now teaching at a major American university came across a former colleague (and hated rival) brought low by the Cultural Revolution and commented, "Well, a regime that has you scrubbing latrines can't be all bad."

Young Chinese-Americans who never saw the old China are more apt to be unambiguously impressed by the new, although they may be brought up short when they are occasionally treated like ordinary Chinese citizens rather than pampered guests. Jan Ting, a twenty-three-year-old graduate student who visited China for two months in the fall of 1971, tells of an incident when "at a small stand selling photographs and photographic supplies, I asked for a roll of 'Seagull' brand 35 mm. black-and-white film. Although the film was arranged in a neat pile in clear view, the attendant refused to sell me one. 'That is for foreign guests. You can buy this kind,' he told me, taking out the 'Shanghai' brand. I knew 'Seagull' was better film because it is the only brand exported. I persisted and told the old gentleman that I was an Overseas Chinese. With that assurance he was willing to sell to me." Ting also recounts several instances when he was seated in an auditorium waiting for a stage performance to begin and "an announcement was made over the loudspeaker, 'Foreign guests are coming; everyone stand up and applaud to welcome them warmly. When they have sat down then [you] sit down.' At this the whole crowd, Overseas Chinese included, stood up and applauded as directed while a group of European men and women entered escorted by their hosts and interpreters." Interestingly enough, Ting attributes his irritation over these incidents *not* to being treated like an ordinary Chinese citizen but to "this perpetuation of 'white-skin privilege' in modern China."

Among the reporters currently visiting and writing about China there is also a great diversity of outlook. The most perceptive and sensible have been men with long years of experience reporting Asian, particularly Chinese, events—men such as Tillman Durdin, Seymour Topping, Stanley Karnow, and Theodore White. Joseph Alsop claims status as an "old China hand" by virtue of his World War II experience in China, but he seems to have spent the last twenty years in a set of ideological blinders of his own making, with the paradoxical result that when he finally removed them reality did not enlighten but totally dazzled him. It is rather odd, at all events, to see a man who ten years ago called China "an internment camp" and who compared the Communist regime to "the Ch'in and Sui dynasties, both police regimes, both regimes which reintegrated and remade China, and both doomed to early extinction because the burdens they imposed on the Chinese people were grossly excessive,"* argue today that if the Soviets start a war with China, the United States should intervene on the Chinese side. By a strange path of convergence, no doubt connected with his years as a Russian correspondent, Harrison Salisbury also returned from China wildly pro-Chinese and anti-Soviet. And James Reston, who has made a career out of denouncing Asian dictatorships, seems to have come away vastly impressed by the biggest one of them all.

WHILE it is disturbing to find evidence of bias, naiveté, or opportunism in the journalistic world, the situation among academics is much worse, partly because of a conscious policy by Peking. Scholars who are ethnically Chinese have been freely granted visas, regardless of their previous Kuomintang connections or present political opinions, because Peking is trying to woo all Overseas Chinese away from their support for Taiwan. But when it comes to "white" American scholars, China has made a definite policy of favoring scholars known to be "friendly" to the regime. Among the friendliest has been a group that calls itself the Com-

* See "On China's Descending Spiral," the *China Quarterly*, July-September 1972.

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mittee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS), which has so far sent two delegations to China, the first of which was granted a long interview with Chou En-lai. The CCAS was formed in 1968 by graduate students and young faculty members specializing in Chinese studies chiefly at those few universities that have major China centers: Harvard, Columbia, the University of California at Berkeley, Stanford, and the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Their stated purpose was to oppose "the brutal aggression of the United States in Vietnam and . . . the complicity or silence of our profession with regard to that policy." Since their founding they have devoted themselves to research designed to demonstrate that the United States is an imperialist power in Asia and that it started the Korean, as well as the Vietnamese, war; that modern Japan is once again a militaristic nation posing a grave threat to China; and that in contemporary China we see the best of all possible societies. When they criticize China at all, it is for not living up to the fullest extent of its socialist and egalitarian ideals: for example, they are dismayed that women do not yet constitute 50 per cent of the labor force in all branches of Chinese life (least of all the Central Committee of the Communist party) and that cadres or persons in authority can still be spotted by their wrist watches, eyeglasses, fountain pens, and tendency to monopolize an interview with foreign visitors.

A group somewhat similar to the CCAS, and having a number of overlapping memberships with it, is the Union of Radical Political Economists (known, unappetizingly, as URPE). This group sent its first friendship delegation to China in the summer of 1972, at which time it described itself as having been founded during the late 1960's to "provide an organizational framework within which academic economists could orient their work to serve the radical movement in the United States. . . . Because we reject bourgeois economics and seek analyses that serve people's needs, we would find it especially useful to exchange information and ideas with the Chinese people." The URPE group is in the process of compiling a book based on its trip; the CCAS has already published one book based on its first trip, entitled *China! Inside the People's Republic,** and is working on another.

Aside from radical scholars such as those affiliated with the CCAS and URPE, a few politically nonaligned China specialists have been allowed to visit China; they include Professors John K. Fairbank and Jerry Cohen (Harvard), Michel Oksenberg (Columbia), Doak Barnett (Brookings Institution), Alexander Eckstein (Michigan), Lucian Pye (MIT), John Lewis (Stanford), and Robert Scalapino (California). With the exception of the first two named, these men were part of a delegation of the Committee on U.S.-China Relations, a non-governmental organization that was created in 1966 to work for improved U.S. relations with China and that helped sponsor the visit of the Chinese ping-pong team to this country. At least one of the men on this delegation, while accepted by the Chinese as a member of this group, was earlier not granted an individual visa because the CCAS had lodged an unfavorable political report on him in Peking.

What scholars such as Doak Barnett and others like him are beginning to publish about their visits to China is a good deal more balanced and better informed than anything we have yet read in the mass media.† Nevertheless, many of them privately concede that their visits did not provide any major new insights into Communist China as a society. Professor Rhoads Murphey, a Sinologist at the University of Michigan who visited China in May 1972, as a member of an American Friends Service Committee delegation (and who also served as a member of a Friends Ambulance Unit in China from 1942 until 1946), has written that "virtually everything I saw and heard was in effect like *China Reconstructs* [a glossy Chinese propaganda magazine] come to life. . . . I do not come away feeling that American scholars of China are missing an enormous dimension by not being able to visit the country themselves, under the conditions which appear to govern virtually all foreign visitors. . . . One sees only the surface, and it is extremely difficult if not impossible to get beyond it except in terms of visual details, which of course do have some importance, but hardly constitute an important new dimension of intellectual understanding." Professor Murphey also came away with the feeling that "it will be a very long time before any significant number of Chinese turn up at scholarly meetings abroad or come to this country as visitors [and] a very, *very* long time before American or perhaps even other foreign scholars can contemplate doing serious research in China, or moving with any freedom around the country, or penetrating very far if at all below the surface."

Of course, there may be exceptions to this, but these exceptions will be controlled by the Chinese. They are now in a position not only to admit people whose political views they know and like, but also to give selected individuals special access to data. There is little doubt, for example, but that Han Suyin, William Hinton, and Jan Myrdal will continue to be allowed to travel, interview, and "do research" in China almost at will. Last summer Roxane Witke, a young historian not affiliated with the CCAS but certainly sympathetic to the regime, was granted some sixty hours of private interviews with Mao Tse-tung's wife, Chiang Ching. Professor Witke was

* Bantam, 433 pp., $1.50 (paper).

† See, as an instance, Barnett's article in the April 8, 1973 New York *Times Magazine*.

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left with the unmistakable impression that Chiang Ching was inviting her to write a biography, much as Mao once told Edgar Snow the story of his life which is now reproduced in the pages of *Red Star over China*. The difference is that Snow was a journalist getting a good scoop, whereas Professor Witke is a scholar whose future access to China will depend on how she treats her subject. ("Good God!" an Eastern European specialist murmured when he heard the above story. "Doesn't she know that at one time or another everyone in our field has been offered 'special help' if he wanted to write a biography of Ceausescu or Tito?") Such issues concerning future research in China are likely to cut a wide swath through the scholarly world. Already badly divided over the war in Vietnam, American China scholars may now be further polarized into those who have been to China and those who have not —and, perhaps more significantly in years to come, those who have been to China once and those who have been to China and can go back any time they want to. The latter will undoubtedly be influential with both students and the general public, but they may pay a stiff price in terms of independent scholarship.

III

THE whole scene is painfully reminiscent of the 1930's responses by journalists, scholars, and others to Soviet Russia. Unfortunately, it does little good to remind those now infatuated with China that many of their illustrious predecessors made fools of themselves then, because they are only too ready to agree. Writes Neville Maxwell: "The Westerner . . . hears his own echoes of the past—the voices of those who went to the Soviet Union and proclaimed a vision of a brave new world. The liberal political imagination was deeply bruised, perhaps maimed, by the discovery, often self-delusively late, of the failure of the Soviet revolution, and there is a consequent tendency to see the phenomena of the new China through the distorting lens of Russian developments. But because revolution has failed once—or indeed a thousand times—does not mean that it must always fail." Of course the Chinese themselves take the view that the Russians perverted their revolution, and some members of the New Left evidently buy the Chinese line so thoroughly that they regard Khrushchev rather than Stalin as the real villain. Jan Myrdal writes in his latest book, *China: The Revolution Continued*,* "The reason why, after Stalin's death, Khrushchev was able to enter the path he did, was that people of the Soviet Union did not have a real grasp on the State, had lost the power to make political decisions to the technocrats and bureaucrats, and therefore could not exercise surveillance over its leaders." It is now argued that China launched the Cultural Revolution in order to "avoid falling into the same stultified and bureaucratized patterns that other revolutionary movements—especially that of the Soviet Union—[have] adopted over time."

Attitudes toward the Cultural Revolution are, in fact, a good touchstone for discriminating between half-way independent observers and fellow-traveling enthusiasts for China. In 1966, when the Cultural Revolution first began, most Western China watchers shook their heads in disbelief and dismay at this latest manifestation of revolutionary fervor. It was not, after all, the first time such a major effort to renew the faith had been made. During the Great Leap Forward, in 1958, the slogan was "Overtake Great Britain in Steel Production in Fifteen Years," and communes sprang up overnight, complete with primitive smelters that were supposed to make them self-sufficient in steel. I remember a Canadian film made at this time that shows Soong Ching-ling (the widow of Sun Yat-sen) and other prominent leaders cheerfully chucking their jewelry and wrist watches into these backyard furnaces to be melted down for the revolution.

Alas, such efforts did not produce very good steel, and in the meantime peasants neglected their agricultural tasks, leading—in conjunction with bad weather—to the "three bitter years" that followed. In the wake of this disaster, Liu Shao-chi emerged as the pragmatic bureaucrat who got the economy back on its feet, in part by permitting peasants to farm "private plots" and retain the proceeds from their sales. Western experts following China's development in the early 1960's generally judged that reasonable policies had been adopted and that the results were promising. They were therefore appalled, in 1966, to see yet another ideological campaign being launched, this time aimed not so much at the peasants as at the party bureaucrats, but nevertheless intensely disruptive. Red Guards rampaged through the country, fought (and killed) one another with primitive cannon, and humiliated, sometimes driving to suicide, numerous intellectuals and highly placed party officials. Liu Shao-chi was one of the chief targets and victims, but other prominent figures—such as Chen Yi and Chou En-lai—also came under attack. Virtually every Chinese embassy overseas was closed, its officials recalled, and Chinese foreign policy was, in essence, paralyzed. No wonder that most Western scholars regarded the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution as a sign that Mao was either senile and no longer in control or, possibly, quite mad. The most charitable interpretation put forward at the time was Robert Lifton's suggestion that Mao, an old man who had made his revolution, nevertheless continued to see his own personality

* Written with Gun Kessle, Random House, 201 pp., $1.95 (paper).

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and immortality bound up with the revolutionary process itself. Or, as Hannah Arendt has lamented, "nothing threatens the very achievements of revolution more dangerously and more acutely than the spirit which has brought them about."

This is not, of course, the view of the Cultural Revolution taken by the CCAS, Jan Myrdal, and others like them—nor, for that matter, by the Chinese themselves. According to their interpretations, the Cultural Revolution was needed to revive the nation's spirit of hard work, self-abnegation, and revolutionary fervor, and to combat the growing seeds of selfishness, bureaucratism, and capitalism. Although these seeds were sown by Liu Shao-chi, rooting them out required not only his dismissal but the dismantling of the Communist party's bureaucracy and the revamping of higher education, which was deemed to be producing specialists who looked down upon the peasantry. For his shock troops Mao enlisted secondary-school students, soon joined by university students, who accused their teachers of such heinous crimes as fostering competition among students, requiring examinations, and teaching "irrelevant subjects." The CCAS, many of whose members cut their revolutionary teeth on the American campus revolts of the late 60's, are clearly exultant over the revamping of the Chinese universities as a result of the Cultural Revolution: "Since we are students ourselves, we were happy to see that students, too, share in administrative power and responsibility at Peking University. . . . The students feel they have a right to help make committee decisions because they should have a say about their own education." (Incidentally, this quote continues: "The PLA [People's Liberation Army] soldiers and workers who remain on campus believe they must play a key role because *they represent the society which should be served by the university*" [emphasis added]—an interesting argument were it also to be extended to the United States.)

One problem with an optimistic interpretation of the Cultural Revolution is that beginning in late-1967, Mao himself clearly realized that the Red Guards had gotten out of hand and ordered a reverse course. Lin Piao's People's Liberation Army (PLA) was called in to stop the fighting in factories and universities and to restore a semblance of order to areas that had been stripped of all governmental bureaucrats; and in most cases the PLA remained on the scene, "merging" with rehabilitated party members and workers, students, or peasants to form new governing bodies known as Revolutionary Committees. However, the immense power that the PLA suddenly acquired as a result of the Cultural Revolution, coupled with the weakened state of the Communist party, evidently led Lin Piao to make an attempt to take complete control of the government. When his attempted coup d'état failed, it is said that Lin tried to escape the country and was killed when his hastily commandeered airplane ran out of gas (or was shot down) over Mongolia.

The CCAS unfortunately visited China and wrote their book before the Lin Piao affair had taken place, so they are full of praise for the PLA and its trusted leader. (Actually, Lin Piao's demise seems to have occurred on September 12, 1971, barely two months after the CCAS's visit, but it was not confirmed by the Chinese until July 1972. In February 1972, when Joseph Kraft asked a Shanghai official about Lin Piao, the answer was, "Eat your lunch.") The new official line is that Lin Piao was *not* Mao's staunchest supporter during the Cultural Revolution but actually promoted the most left-wing of the Red Guard attacks so that in the resulting chaos he and the army would emerge as the sole source of order. This explanation proved to be a bit much even for Harrison Salisbury, who points out that if true, "it required a remarkably Machiavellian character, because the suggestion is that, on the one hand, Lin Piao was secretly inspiring, suggesting, and protecting the instigators of *luan* [disorder] while, on the other hand, he was employing his disciplined PLA military forces to put down *luan*." Lin Piao is now also blamed for the cult of Mao (the CCAS already notes in its book that "Mao himself has said that he did not like the 'personality cult' aspects of this veneration") —which Lin is supposed to have fostered in order to have some of it rub off on him, Mao's designated successor. And Lin is supposed to have been in communication with the Soviet Union—as evidenced by his plane having been headed toward the Russian border—so that he has been branded by the Chinese as "Left in form but in reality Right."

Fellow-traveling enthusiasts for China swallow all these political explanations with the alacrity of trained seals. Thus they persist in claiming that the Cultural Revolution was a wonderful idea that has not been reversed, and that while Lin Piao proved to be an opportunist, Mao and his wife suspected this all along and used the Cultural Revolution to trap him. Reading these optimistic accounts, one sometimes gets the impression that Pangloss is speaking and that all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds. Or, as David Caute has put it: "The fellow-traveler almost invariably maintains that things are fine *now*—until the authorities announce they are not fine and that something must be done; whereupon things once again become fine." Given the progression of victims in the Cultural Revolution —the cadres who initially came under attack, the Red Guards who did the attacking, and the man who led the PLA in bringing the Red Guards under control—it may even prove necessary for them to swallow, at some future point in time, a Chinese Khrushchev who gets up at a party meet-

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ing and denounces the instigator of it all: Mao Tse-tung himself.

PART of the reason why many travelers to China end up identifying themselves with the current leadership and reflecting its viewpoints lies in the nature of the trip itself. Foreign visitors are kept in separate hotels, whisked from place to place in curtained limousines, briefed by high officials, and wined and dined by government and party leaders. I do not mean to imply that experienced journalists such as Reston, Salisbury, and Alsop, who have interviewed many famous world figures, are necessarily swept off their feet by such treatment, but in China they have no opportunity to gather other sorts of data independently—either from private citizens or dissident government factions. (It is often pointed out that Westerners learned very little about the inner workings of Soviet Russia until Trotsky went into exile.) Thus there is a strangely sycophantic tone to many to the books and articles currently being written about China—*viz.* Alsop: "[Chou En-lai] moves like a young man, and the years have failed to blur the remarkable bold, yet fine-cut, lines of his face. It is a face, too, with more expression than most Chinese permit themselves. By turns, he is genial or stern, wryly amused or deeply serious. Overall, he conveys a memorable impression of inner strength combined with lucid intelligence." Or Harrison Salisbury: "I was fortunate enough to spend evenings with two of this remarkable company [of Chinese leaders], Premier Chou En-lai and Mme. Soong, and I concluded that if all of China's leadership was as vigorous, as sparkling and sharp-witted, China was not ill-served by relying on age rather than youth. . . . As each course was served, Mme. Soong rose in her chair, . . . and insisted on serving me, as is the Chinese custom. . . . Soon we were eating enormous prawns, and then a Peking fish. . . . The dinner went on and on, from one delight to another." Or Audrey Topping: "Dinner with Premier Chou En-lai is a gourmet delight. Even the table talk, centered on hard political issues, couldn't detract from the joy of eating numerous superbly prepared and served exotic dishes. . . . The hors d'oeuvres included a sumptuous array of cold chicken slices with paprika, stuffed crab meat, tomatoes and cucumbers, ham, sliced pork, bean curd, and cold string beans. There were untold side dishes of buns, stuffed dumplings, and boiled rice." (One is also tempted to conclude, from these recitals, that one of China's great secret weapons is its cuisine. John K. Galbraith's travel diary consists almost exclusively of descriptions of palaces visited and banquets consumed.)

Only Barbara Tuchman seems to have been driven to the point of churlishness by all of this care and attention lavished on her by China's upper-crust. She writes: "We made the acquaintance of five or six of these comrades [Vice-Chairmen of Provincial Revolutionary Committees] at dinners which the Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, our sponsoring escorts, insisted on giving in each city to welcome visiting 'foreign friends' (the new official designation for all foreigners). In the presence of the local commissar as presiding host, subordinates hardly venture a word; conversational attempts are left to the guests through an interpreter. The commissar, genial but bored, confines himself to the toast-drinking routine and suavely avoids any conversation above the level of 'How long have you been in China?' and 'How long will you stay?' These men, at least those we met, do not convey an impression of quality above the union-boss level."

Among scholars with a predilection for planning, the elitist tendency to identify with a country's leadership seems to be a part of their analytical equipment. Lewis Feuer has commented on this phenomenon in connection with the appeal that Soviet Russia held for social workers: "At the very outset, Jane Addams called the Russian Revolution 'the greatest social experiment in history.' This enthusiasm became universal among her colleagues during the next years. In the new Soviet society, as they saw it, the social worker was not the 'do-gooder' condescendingly tolerated by a selfish world but was rather the foremost participant and definer of the society's goals."* In a similar vein, economists such as Wassily Leontief and John K. Galbraith favor planned economies and see any malfunctioning that results as easily remedied by still further planning. Leontief acknowledges that China is too large to be successfully administered entirely from the center, and so he approves of the current emphasis on making regions and communes more self-sufficient. He equally approves of various manpower policies (such as sending students to live in the countryside and drafting large numbers of men and women into the army) which are then brought into play to counteract "the undesirable tendencies toward unequalities which a single-minded emphasis on self-help might bring about." John K. Galbraith is aware that in a highly organized economy, "organization is by its nature hierarchical—it is a built-in class system in which some command, many comply. The officer class has also a tendency to harden into a privileged and self-perpetuating caste which invites the next revolt." But fortunately, he says, the Chinese leaders have found a solution to this problem: the Cultural Revolution; and "There is a hint in the thought of Mao Tse-tung that a periodic churning-up is necessary."

Although such attitudes are clearly elitist—"I,

* See "American Travelers to the Soviet Union 1917-32: The Formation of a Component of New Deal Idcology," in *Marx and the Intellectuals: A Set of Post-Ideological Essays*, Anchor Books, 1969.

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in my wisdom (in concert with the Chinese leadership), know what is best for the Chinese masses"—they are often defended as being anti-elitist. Thus the CCAS finds nothing disturbing about the disappearance of short stories, poetry, and other kinds of creative writing in China today, because "as long as there are millions of partly educated peasants and workers and some highly educated people at the top of a cultural and educational bureaucracy, a culture based on literature will continue to be an elite culture." And when Ross Terrill expresses some concern over the fate of Chinese intellectuals, Neville Maxwell chides him for being a bourgeois intellectual whose "sympathy [is] that of a member of one elite for those of an elite deprived or an elite *manqué*."* One must remember, in dealing with such terminological reversals, that Maxwell and other members of the CCAS are indulging in a remote-control radicalism and that they might not be nearly so sanguine were the locomotive of history running over their own young bodies. David Caute, commenting on this phenomenon in the Soviet context, notes "the despair of the non-official Soviet intelligentsia during the years of persecution and terror [when] in their darkest hours they heard themselves condemned by their own kind, by foreigners who shared their own idealistic traditions and whose immunity from imprisonment or death was due solely to the accident of nationality."

In the case of China, perhaps the most depressing illustration has been the praise lavished by so many Western intellectuals on the so-called May 7th Schools. These institutions, created during the Cultural Revolution, are labor camps where party officials, intellectuals, and bureaucrats are sent to learn the value of working with their hands and to reform their thoughts. Many foreign visitors have been taken to a model May 7th School in the eastern outskirts of Peking, which Harrison Salisbury has cheerfully described as "a combination of a YMCA Camp and a Catholic retreat." Here, according to other sanguine reports, "The work is certainly hard, though probably not intolerable. Only three days a week are spent in the fields, . . . The other two days are spent in collective discussions and self-criticisms." (There is something wrong here on the surface, since no one in China adheres to the five-day week.) One is reminded, in these descriptions of May 7th Schools, of the glowing terms in which visitors to Russia described the model prison at Bolchevo. The whole scene was later savagely caricatured by Solzhenitsyn in *The First Circle*: " 'What are these people being punished for? For example, that gentleman who is reading the magazine?' the distinguished guest asked. ('That gentleman' had received ten years for a careless acquaintance with an American tourist.) The major general replied, 'That man was an active Hitlerite. He worked for the Gestapo. He personally burned down a Russian village, and, if you'll forgive my speaking of such things, raped three Russian peasant girls. The number of children he killed will probably never be known.' 'Has he been condemned to death?' Mrs. R exclaimed. 'No, we hope he will reform. He has been sentenced to ten years of honest labor.' "

The CCAS is convinced that doing time in a May 7th School is not a form of punishment and writes that soon all Chinese officials, intellectuals, and bureaucrats will be sent there periodically for what they placidly refer to as "a revolutionary sabbatical." They also think it would be a wonderful idea for American bureaucrats—"Can you imagine bureaucrats who administer the American government's poverty program ever leaving their isolation in Washington and going to live for even a few months in Appalachia?"—though they say nothing about the desirability of rusticating American students and intellectuals to, say, Utah and Wyoming. However, John K. Galbraith thinks that "rotating a few professors [of economics] through General Motors, Young and Rubicam, Proctor and Gamble, and ITT would be a wonderful corrective of the myths of the stalwart individual entrepreneur, the sovereign unmanaged consumer, and a government superior to all economic interest—all these being thoughts which we now perpetuate. A spell in the factory might consolidate relations between student supporters of George McGovern and the minions of George Meany."

Harrison Salisbury claims to have met one Chinese official who described his stint in a May 7th School as "the great experience of my life" and praised it for having rid him of selfishness and his tendency to think of his life in individual terms. Salisbury goes on to comment, "And it was true. I knew it had to be true from the emotion in his voice, the reverence with which he spoke." Again, evidently only Barbara Tuchman, visiting a May 7th School in Shensi, noticed "the sad, subdued look and remote eyes of a gray-haired surgeon from the leading hospital of the provincial capitai, suggest[ing] that the process does not always work."

IV

At least in part fellow-traveling reports about China appear to be identical in motive and message to those emanating from the Soviet Union during the 1930's. There is the same yearning to see—even if it takes rose-colored spectacles and some selective blind-spots—the perfect society leading, in turn, to the perfection of man himself. (Marxist-Leninists do not believe in any intrinsic human nature apart from its shaping by society; Maoists are a

* Review article, the *China Quarterly*, October-December 1972.

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little less clear on this point since according to Mao "bourgeois elements" may emerge even when there is no bourgeois class to nurture them.) This search for a better society is usually given impetus by a profound disillusionment or disgust with one's own. During the 30's, the Depression convinced many people that democratic capitalism was a hopelessly inadequate form of social organization. Today, the Vietnam war, crime, drug addiction, and other social problems serve much the same function. One sees this in the writings of many of the current visitors to China. Salisbury writes that "I had convinced myself that there was in China a new spirit among men, a contagious spirit, one on which China could build. But could America match it? . . . When would the New American Man and the New American Woman walk the earth, proud and confident, making the oceans boil and the continents shake?" And John Fairbank concludes, "If their [the people of China] highly organized and moralistic efforts at regeneration are to be stigmatized as regimentation, then we must ask whether our own unregimented efforts are equally adequate to our far different needs and circumstances."* Even Henry Kissinger is recently quoted as saying that he likes the Chinese because "they have a *Weltanschauung*. The rest of us have lost our way."

One senses, in such musings, a yearning for complete national unity and perfect order—aspects of totalitarianism that have long attracted intellectuals as diverse as Ezra Pound, George Bernard Shaw, and Herbert Marcuse. It may be that the stresses and ambivalences of modern American life have produced on the Left of the political spectrum impulses similar to those now popular on the Right, and that, since it would not be politically acceptable for leftists to couch such impulses in Agnewish calls for law and order, or Wallaceite attacks on bureaucrats and "pointy-headed" intellectuals, they find respectable expression through an admiration for Chinese society. China is neat, clean, orderly; China has no drug or crime problem, no pornography, no shoddy consumer goods; Chinese bureaucrats and intellectuals know how to work with their hands. The appeal of China to members of the American Left also coincides with the rural commune movement in this country and the strong desire of many college dropouts to return to the land and live a simpler life. It is, of course, ironic that many of the measures that would bring about a more Chinese-like society in our own country—the social control of promiscuity, the banning of pornographic literature, the arrest of drug users, and the putting of all personal choices about career, work place, or life-style into the hands of the state—are things to which the Left is violently opposed.

Finally, the current enthusiasm for China also draws on a much older, religious strand in American thought which dates back to the missionary movement of the 19th century, when Americans heard about the industrious, long-suffering Chinese in church every Sunday and were encouraged to help save this "Niagara of souls passing into the dark in China." This missionary-inspired idealization of the Chinese peasant—formerly so prominent in the works of writers like Pearl Buck and Alice Tisdale Hobart—can once again be found in much of the current writing.

Unfortunately, as Harold Isaacs long ago pointed out in his excellent study *Images of Asia*,† such one-sided stereotypes are less dependent on facts than on the predispositions of the viewer; hence they can change almost overnight. The Chinese went from being regarded as hard-working, honest, and frugal during the pre-war and World War II years to being thought of as sneaky, arrogant, and cruel during the 50's and 60's. At the same time, the Japanese were regarded as sneaky, arrogant, and cruel during the late 30's and war years; whereas the postwar period brought about their redefinition as hard-working, honest, and frugal. It is even possible that these two polar-opposite stereotypes of East Asians are somehow linked in our minds and that when China is up, Japan will be down, and vice versa. Certainly many Asian specialists are disturbed once again to catch a distinctly anti-Japanese tone in the voices of many recent visitors to China, including Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger. Thus the euphoria over China is not merely misleading in and of itself, but is also likely to have repercussions in our relations with Japan and the Soviet Union. No one wishes to suggest that improved relations with China are not desirable and long overdue, but to mistake a marriage of convenience for a love-match may lead to much unhappiness for everyone in the future.

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* *Foreign Affairs*, October 1972.

† Capricorn Books, 1962; originally published as *Scratches on Our Minds*, 1958.

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On the Rights of Minorities

Conor Cruise O'Brien

Sometimes the only right a minority seems to want is the right to become a majority; and sometimes the minority achieves this by bringing about a change in the political context, including by means of civil war. But apart from the rights which minorities actually claim, or want, what rights should they have? Or can such a separation in practice be maintained at all rigidly? Certainly there is no use telling a minority it should have rights which in fact it does not want, or which it feels to be irrelevant to its actual needs and situation. And the rights which minorities have actually claimed vary widely indeed.

Many minorities have asserted, and for periods of time maintained, a right to rule over majorities: the British in India, for example, or the Afrikaaners in South Africa, East European Communist parties, and the West Nile soldiery in Uganda. This claim of right has been grounded in theory on genetic, theological, and ideological conceptions, and in practice most often on superior fire-power. It may be said that the right of a particular minority to rule over a majority is no right at all but an arrogant pretension. In terms of liberal and democratic values this is certainly so. But some uncomfortable considerations enter here. For is not a commitment to liberal and democratic values in itself a characteristic of a minority, quite a small minority, as it would appear, of the inhabitants of this planet? That being so, by exactly what right do we (that is, our kind of people) tell or try to tell or think about telling other minorities what their rights are and what they are not? Not by any democratic right, certainly. We tell, let us say, the Tutsi that the right he fancies he possesses to dominate the Hutu is not a real right. He replies in effect that as far as his culture is concerned it *is* a right. We tell him it is not a right because it is contrary to democracy, an ideology to which our ancestors became converted in the 19th century. He says his ancestors did not become so converted; are we claiming that our ancestors were superior to his? Now, that is a forked question, and we have to be very careful how we answer it. If we say, "No, no, of course not, my dear fellow," he can say in reply: By what right then are we telling him that he must act according to the acquired convictions of our ancestors who are admittedly no better than his own? If, on the other hand, we say, yes, our people represent a more advanced stage of civilization than his do, he may reply that this is exactly his own position in relation to the Hutu.

An imaginary discussion of this kind illustrates, I think, a real difficulty inherent in attempting to define, from within a particular historical phase of a particular culture, norms that will be applicable in widely scattered and diverse human conditions and situations about which, generally speaking, our knowledge is limited. It would take the nerve of an early 19th-century missionary explorer to set about such a task with full conviction. We do not have that kind of nerve any more, but neither, fortunately, have we acquired the opposite kind of nerve, the nerve to say, with Nietzsche, "There are whole peoples who have failed," and to be entirely indifferent to their lot. Western ideas about the underdeveloped world have never been so uncertain and so tentative as they are now. The certainties of imperialism are gone, but so are the certainties of anti-imperialism: the bright hopes of decolonization, the faith in the transforming power of technical aid, the charismatic appeal of a great convergence of world revolution. All these ideas are still around, but one senses a certain lack of conviction in relation to them. We are groping, and more than half afraid of the things we may find. We send and receive faint and ambiguous signals. Sometimes, as in the case of Biafra, of Bangladesh, of the Uganda Asians, we are sufficiently moved to try to help in some way, and sometimes also, when we look back, we cannot be sure whether what we did actually helped or hindered.

The cases which in any event have touched imaginations and consciences in Europe and America are cases not of ruling minorities but of

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Conor Cruise O'Brien is the author of *United Nations: Sacred Drama, Albert Camus, Writers and Politics*, and, most recently, *States of Ireland*. Dr. O'Brien served as representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Katanga in 1961 and was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana from 1962-65. He is currently Minister for Posts and Telegraphs of the Republic of Ireland. The present essay has been adapted from a lecture sponsored by the Minority Rights Group, an international research-and-information body concerned with issues of discrimination and human rights, and delivered by Dr. O'Brien in London in November 1972.

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underdogs—people suffering varying degrees and kinds of harassment, from the quiet but terrible social ostracism which surrounds the Burakumin in Japan to the waves of violent persecution experienced in turn by Bengali and Bihari in East Pakistan/Bangladesh, to take only fairly recent or contemporary examples. It is of these endangered or stigmatized minorities that we generally think when we ask what rights minorities should have. Yet even in relation to such minorities the question remains extraordinarily hard to answer. The rights which such minorities, or at least their spokesmen, have historically sought, include—and this is not an exhaustive list—first of all, social integration into the wider society, a right claimed at various times by certain American Negro groups, Jews in 19th-century Germany and elsewhere and in the 20th-century Soviet Union, Algerian Moslems in France at one time, Catholics in Northern Ireland at the time of the campaign for full British rights (1967-69), and West Indians in Britain at one time. We may take it too that this is what people like the Burakumin in Japan want, and that without this particular right other rights can have little meaning for them. And this is a right which neither domestic law nor international convention can secure, although in certain circumstances some display of international interest may help. American blacks certainly benefited from such interest from the time of Little Rock on, and so also, although more ambiguously, have Northern Irish Catholics.

A SECOND form of rights which minorities have sought is economic, technical, and functional integration, including equality of access to training and promotion, but without the demand for full social integration: the Chinese of North America, the Pakistanis of Britain, are examples. Most of those who have sought or seemed to seek social integration have in fact often been interested in this economic kind as well, and perhaps in some cases more in this kind than in social integration. There can be notable ambiguities and deceptive appearances in this area. For instance, when Northern Irish Catholic spokesmen demanded full British rights in 1968-69, they were not really, as they seemed to be, looking for assimilation into the British community. What they were really doing was tactical: turning the Ulster Protestant claim, "Ulster is British," into a weapon against the internal realities of the Ulster Protestant state. Only four years later the right claimed by the same spokesmen was opposite in direction: integration into a united Ireland. And it could reasonably be argued that the contradictory rights sought at different times were in reality aimed at securing the only right that would have much practical meaning in the lives of those concerned, namely, economic and functional integration. In practice, also, the line between economic and social integration is hard to draw. To the extent that education is conducted in common with the majority, it works, however imperfectly, toward social integration. If education is separate, the majority will not be easily convinced, or will not easily admit, that the schools of the minority can really give adequate training to warrant the kind of access to jobs and promotion that the minority will accept as constituting equality of opportunity.

A third case: sometimes the right to which a minority comes to commit itself, often having tried other things with what it feels to be lack of success, is the diametrical opposite of integration, namely, political secession. The same minority, under different conditions, may be committed at one stage to total integration and at another to complete secession. The Ibos of Nigeria offer perhaps the classic example of this in recent times.

With the exception of the right claimed by certain minorities to rule over majorities, secession constitutes the most doubtful and controversial of all minority rights, if indeed it can be called a right at all. Secession is an unpopular idea, and naturally so since it threatens public order and the very life of a state. Yet hardly anyone would claim that there is *no* such thing as a right to secede under any circumstances at all. The nearest one comes to such a position is in the United States, where for more than a century the dominant tradition—that of the Northern victors in the Civil War—has been strongly anti-secessionist; yet even proponents of this position would hardly deny in retrospect the right of the American colonies to have seceded from the empire of George III, or of what are now the Latin American states to have seceded from Spain with the help of the United States.

For a long time the distinction was made that it was all right to secede from things called empires but wrong to secede from things called republics. This distinction stood Woodrow Wilson in good stead when at the end of World War I he dropped that great secessionist fragmentation-bomb, the principle of the self-determination of nations. In the wake of World War I this principle was used to break up the defeated empires, and after World War II it was applied to the territories of the British and French empires. But there was a difference. In the post-World War I period an attempt was made to build the new states as far as possible around historical, cultural, and linguistic groupings, such as we have been accustomed to describe as nations. In the case of the post-World War II division, hardly any corresponding effort to sort out peoples was attempted, and the arbitrary assumption was made, perhaps had to be made, that the various colonial administrative territories, all of short duration and some of vast extent, now in fact constituted nations, and were exercising their self-determination. (The meaning of the term

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"self-determination" had perceptibly changed by this point in time.) In fact some of the peoples included in these new nations, and some of those later anxious to escape from them, were, at least for a time, more numerous than the population of some of the new states that had been set up in Europe under the principle of self-determination at the end of World War I.

It is hard to see, if the question is put on a moral plane, why self-determination should be right in one case and necessarily wrong in another. I believe that secession is an evil, or rather the recognition of an evil, a breakdown in human relations. I also believe that no minority is likely to have recourse to it, with all its dangers, unless the pressures on the minority are felt to be intolerable, and unless there are also other sufficient conditions to make it possible—I have in mind such factors as numerical strength, terrain, diplomatic conjuncture, and so forth. It would be uselessly pedantic to draw up a set of rules for when secession may be regarded as a right. The Biafrans, for example, felt after the Northern massacre of Ibos that they had—and they asserted this passionately—the same basic right to defend themselves as had had the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto. They may have been unwise in attempting secession, and it now seems they were. They may have exaggerated the danger, and it now seems they did. But it would be hard to find grounds for saying that they had no moral right to make their attempt. As for the recognition of that right by others, here we may apply the cynical old maxim about treason: "Treason doth never prosper; what's the reason? That if it prosper none dares call it treason." Bangladesh is now recognized by all, Biafra by none. The reason is not that Bangladesh had necessarily a better moral case than Biafra, though perhaps it had. The reason is that the Indian army beat the army of Pakistan. Biafra, having no such ally, died.

The fear or threat of secession, as opposed to secession itself, is a double-edged weapon for minorities. On the one hand, it may secure advantages, by making a majority anxious to conciliate lest worse befall. On the other hand, fear may goad the majority to particularly harsh and oppressive action. There may even be a cyclical alternation of these two different reactions over longer or shorter periods, like the alternations of coercion and conciliation in 19th-century Ireland, or the oscillations in recent British policy in Northern Ireland. Finally, a population which is not in itself secessionist and which is even fairly far along the road of one form or another of integration can harbor militant secessionist elements, and can regard these with the most varied and fluctuating emotions. Thus, minorities can look upon their own militant secessionist elements, with their claims to represent the political vanguard, with such emotions as admiration, sympathy, apprehension, anxiety, guilt, fear, and hatred. These emotions may follow changing patterns in response both to the activities of the militants themselves and to whatever forms of coercion or conciliation the majority is trying and with what success—all in a great flux in situations of potential secession.

Minorities are in fact often divided as to what rights they really want, or think they want. Even individual members of minorities are often divided within themselves, and change in mood from year to year or month to month, or even at different times of the day. A partly integrated society forces versatility in role-playing in an unusual degree on minority members. I have observed both in faraway countries and nearer at home certain minority people playing one role in the presence of local majority people, a second role, equally artificial, in the presence of more militant members of their own minority, and a third role, more natural, with their own friends, all minority people but none of them aggressively minoritarian. (That is a point too: minorities are not being minorities, or thinking of themselves as minorities, all the time.) In the first context these people may sound like social integrationists; in the second they may behave as if they were at heart secessionists; and in the third they may show themselves to be on the whole economic integrationists, with not much more taste for social integration in the full sense than for secession. But the conviction with which they adopt these roles will vary according to mood, the previous day's news, or even the rumors of the day itself.

There are, finally, minorities which are so placed that neither social or economic integration nor secession seems relevant to their situation. Thus the Crimean Tartars, it seems, wish neither to be integrated in Kazakhstan, nor to secede from it. They just want to be allowed to return to their Crimean home. The Ugandan Asians at the end just wanted to get out of Uganda—with their lives, their families, with anything they were allowed to carry. This is of course the last right, or almost the last right, of a minority, and is an extreme case. For most it is a question of one or another form of integration, or a blend of the two, or, much more rarely, of contemplated secession, independence. And the last is not likely to be undertaken seriously by any sizable body of people, except as a result of a total or at least major breakdown in the process of integration.

One approach to the entire problem with which I am concerned here is not to speak of minority rights or majority rights at all, but rather of human rights. Rights, that is, may be best thought of as inherent in each human being, irrespective of what kind of cultural grouping he or she may belong to. Those

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who hold this point of view—it is one I myself have increasingly come to share—point out that the culture of a group can sometimes condone or even legislate systematic violations of basic human rights. When we are asked to respect the culture of a group we may be asked to respect, for example, the Hindu caste system, the treatment of women in Islam and in a number of other cultures, female circumcision in certain cultures, ostracism of twins in others, and so on. To speak in terms of group rights—as we do when we speak of minority rights—may thus involve connivance in the actual denial of rights to stigmatized members of the groups in question.

There is a great deal of force in this argument, which is reflected in a document like the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In general at the United Nations this is the approach that has been favored, nor is there much debate about it among the various blocs or between developed and underdeveloped countries, although on the whole the "developed" countries are more sympathetic to group rights than are the "underdeveloped" countries. This may seem surprising for more than one reason. The language of the document which people of so many cultures *appear* to find acceptable is clearly the product of one special culture, that of Western Europe including the Europeans of North America. More than that, it has been powerfully argued by some people from the Third World that this generalized and abstract concern with human rights as defined by Europeans has historically served as an instrument, consciously or unconsciously applied, for the disruption of other people's cultures. That case is argued, with considerable subtlety and power, by Frantz Fanon. I am not thinking particularly here of *The Wretched of the Earth* (which seems to me a somewhat overrated work) but of an essay in a volume called *Studies in a Dying Colonialism*. The essay is on the *haik*, the veil-garment worn by Moslem women, which Fanon takes as a symbol and analyzes in a most interesting way.

Fanon was writing about conditions in Algeria under French rule in the period after World War II and before the Algerian Revolution. This was a time when ideas of integration were in the air, when many Arabs, led by Ferhat Abbas, were demanding full French rights, and when some Frenchmen saw France's future in Algeria as depending on the development of a large class of Arab Frenchmen—and Frenchwomen. It was on this last point, as Fanon describes it, that the test came. Would the typical Arab civil servant, who claimed to be as French as anyone else, and who demanded promotion rights on a French scale, bring his wife to an office party *without* the veil? Fanon describes the hints, the arch inquiries made on this score. Frenchmen now saw, and French Arabs at least tried to see, the rejection of the *haik* as an act of liberation. Fanon, in his turn, throws a harsh light on the humiliations that could accompany such an apparent act of liberation. For Fanon, the later reappearance of the *haik* was the *real* act of liberation, insofar as it symbolized in his view the recovery by the Arabs of their pride in themselves and their culture, their final rejection of "interior" colonization. Yet Fanon also thought of the resumption of the *haik* by Arab women as both voluntary and temporary. He stressed the role of some Arab women in the revolution, and even rather pathetically pointed out how useful the veil was for concealing arms and ammunition. He thought that after liberation the *haik* and all it stood for would disappear. (So far as I know, it did not; in reading Fanon we should remember this too.)

The point is, Fanon assumed the veil *should* disappear. And thus, beneath all his ultra-Third World rhetoric, which has fascinated so many people, Fanon can be seen to have had more in common with the French, of whose educational system he was a product, than with most of the Arabs whose cause he championed. The same, or something corresponding to it, is true of most educated Third World intellectuals who represent their underdeveloped countries at the United Nations and other international bodies. These people have no difficulty with the Universal Declaration, because they were brought up on the *Declaration des Droits de l'Homme* or its Anglo-Saxon equivalents. Any one of them would think it derogatory to his country's status were someone to suggest he might be unwilling to sign such a document, even though he might know that no such rights were in fact recognized by his own government in its daily relations with its citizens. Even when he pays lip service to the declaration in a cynical spirit he is not necessarily being more hypocritical than some of his 18th-century predecessors, the *philosophes*, who (like Voltaire) were not above a flutter in the slave trade, or the slave-owners who signed the Declaration of Independence. Universal declarations tend anyway to be professed with mental reservations, sometimes unconscious: "not for slaves," "not for savages," "not for 'those' people." Sometimes language has helped. A Japanese, for example, can sign a declaration setting out the rights of people without having to think at all about the position of the outcastes in his own society, since the word for these outcastes in his language is *hinin*, non-people.

As a matter of experience I have found that people who are all in favor of human rights generally speaking are very likely to become suspicious where there is any question of *minority* rights. Human rights is a pleasing abstraction impregnated with the notion of one's own benevolence. But minority rights evokes a sudden sharp picture of "that lot" with their regrettable habits, extravagant claims,

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ridiculous complaints, and suspect intentions. Governments are representative, of course, either of majorities or more often of ruling minorities which of course do not think of themselves as minorities. It is therefore unlikely that an international association on the scale of the United Nations could promulgate an effective code giving specific protection to minorities. The United Nations has attempted from time to time to cope with this problem in a gingerly way, but has flinched away from it. More limited bodies like the Council of Europe, representing countries which are more secure from threats of secession, have taken some steps in this direction, but the countries most affected by minority problems and where minorities themselves have the most acute problems are not anxious to enter the area. As for a private body attempting to draw up such a code, that would be a most difficult task, and I am not at all sure that its utility would be proportionate to its difficulty. The leverage applicable to governments through their adherence or putative adherence to the Universal Declaration is not much (indeed it is pitiably little), but it is something. The leverage applicable through a code not accepted by governments and—almost by definition—not acceptable to them, would likely be nil; it might even be counterproductive.

Despite its defects, and I have tried to indicate some of them, I believe that on the whole the universalist approach, based on rights inherent in each individual being, remains the most hopeful one. We ought not, after all, to idealize minorities or to forget that today's underdog may be tomorrow's power-crazed bully. (Anyone who may be inclined to forget this lesson should place on his desk a photograph of General Amin and contemplate it daily.) Or that certain custodians of minority cultures, and certain vehement exponents of minority political rights, may already be playing such a role within their own little community. In present conditions, we ought in effect to be saying to governments whose policies we deplore and seek to change: "We desire no special rights for minorities, yours or any others. Members of minority groups should have the same human rights as members of majorities, no less and not necessarily any more for the moment than those set out in the Universal Declaration to which you subscribe. But we have evidence that shows that members of such and such a minority are being denied these rights under your government. Unless you set about correcting this situation, we shall have to publish this evidence with, inevitably, undesirable results for your country's reputation and prospects." Such efforts in fact are not in vain. In mild situations a government will not wish any part of its population to be the object of private or international attention, and will wish to ameliorate the conditions so described. And even in the most dire situations, international attention can at least help the survivors. Thus, it is no detraction from the credit due to the magnanimity of the present Nigerian government in relation to the defeated people of what was once Biafra, to say that the attention concentrated on the question by the world at large was probably of a nature to encourage precisely this counsel of magnanimity—if only to prove that the alarmist things that were being said about what Nigeria would do were not true. Our most pressing concern should now perhaps be, not to define what rights minorities should have, but to find which techniques are most appropriate for conveying to governments the message that decency in relation to minorities is a quality helpful to any country in its international relations.

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Rethinking Israel's Position

Shlomo Avineri

THE influential and outspoken Secretary General of Israel's Labor Federation (Histadrut), Yitzhak Ben-Aharon, recently shocked many of his countrymen when he suggested that Israel consider withdrawing unilaterally from part of the occupied territories, particularly in the West Bank, even before the signing of a peace treaty. The prevailing situation, which, he argued, sets the territories in a kind of satellite relationship to Israel, is leading to a serious imbalance in Israeli society; as Arabs in increasing numbers enter the labor force a drift has begun to develop toward the creation of a predominantly Arab proletariat. It is a situation, he warned, which is fraught with danger for the social and political integrity of the Jewish state.

Ben-Aharon is a perceptive labor leader and he is perhaps more aware than others of the unattractive features that have been creeping into the mixed economy of Israel's social-democracy. But in his strictures on the dangers of Arab labor he appears to have been moved mainly by the specter of the 1920's and 1930's, when cheap, non-unionized Arab labor threatened to squeeze out the organized Jewish workers. At the time, this would indeed have resulted in inhibiting or perhaps even preventing the Jewish community in Mandatory Palestine from developing a viable, self-supporting social structure. Today, however, a Jewish working class is well-entrenched in the economy, and the Arab laborers from Judea and Samaria and from the Gaza strip who flock to Israel to take jobs in the booming construction industry, as well as in some agricultural and service sectors, are not squeezing out any Jewish workers. On the contrary, they are replacing Jews who have moved up into more skilled occupations.

Moreover, the 50,000 or so Arab workers from the occupied territories now working in Israel make up less than 7 per cent of the country's labor force, and structurally they occupy a position similar to that of the marginal proletariat—seasonal workers, migrants, etc.—to be found in all industrial societies. What Ben-Aharon overlooked is the fact that with the advent of peace, this trend, rather than abating, would be likely to accelerate; with the full throwing open of its borders, Israel would become for the Arabs what Switzerland is now for many Italians and Germany for more than a million Yugoslavs, Greeks, and Turks. This is the burden of industrialized nations; it is not a malaise specific to the Israeli occupation of Arab-inhabited areas.

Be that as it may, however, Ben-Aharon's statements reflect a growing realization in Israel that the Six-Day War effected major and historic changes in Israeli society. They are an indication, too, of the exasperation which many Israelis now feel with the past six years of "neither war nor peace." All in all, Ben-Aharon's outspokenness on the delicate subject of the occupied territories—hitherto rare among public officials—must be seen as part of a wave of national self-examination, reappraisal, and redefinition which far transcends the usual discussion of public issues in Israel, an exercise generally marked by self-congratulation or, alternatively, self-pity.

Three recent books in particular, which have caught the attention of the Israeli public, strikingly attest to the new mood of national candor. The first is *Israel and the Crisis of Western Civilization*, by Eliezer Livneh.* No stranger to controversy, Livneh has for almost two decades played a unique role in Israeli public life—that of the independent intellectual without a base in either a political party or a university. Livneh began his public career in the 1920's as a radical socialist and a pioneer in the labor movement. He was the first secretary of the United Kibbutz movement (Hakibbutz Hameuchad), was prominent in the Mapai party, and was a central figure in the political leadership of the Haganah. After 1948 he became a Mapai member of the Knesset and served in the 1950's as editor of the

SHLOMO AVINERI, whose contributions to COMMENTARY include the widely-discussed "The Palestinians and Israel" (June 1970), is currently head of the Eshkol Institute for Economic, Social, and Political Research at the Hebrew University. The Institute is presently engaged in a series of projects dealing with the impact of the Six-Day War on Israeli society. Mr. Avineri's most recent book is *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*.

* *Yisrael u-Mashber ha-Zivilisatsia ha-Ma'aravit*, Schocken, Jerusalem/Tel Aviv.

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party's ill-fated evening paper, *Hador*. At that time he quarreled with the rather doctrinaire economic theories of the labor movement, calling for greater freedom of private enterprise. Eventually Mapai adopted many of his proposals, but he himself was ousted from the party; challenging Ben-Gurion's authority openly, as Livneh did, was a dangerous undertaking in those days. In the years that followed, Livneh moved in a political wilderness, sometimes making common cause with such unlikely partners as the right-wing lawyer Shmuel Tamir, on the one hand, and the maverick Orthodox Professor Yeshayahu Leibowitz, on the other. He finally came into his own after 1967 as one of the extreme spokesmen of the Movement for the Entire Land of Israel, whose political platform calls for annexation of the occupied territories.*

Israel and the Crisis of Western Civilization summarizes Livneh's thinking since 1967. There are illuminating chapters here on such subjects as the role of Jewish intellectuals in the Russian revolutionary movement, modern anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, and the malaise of post-industrial Western society. But the heart of the book is an extended discussion of Israel and Judaism—and a curious spectacle it proves. Livneh is basically a secular, rationalist intellectual, nurtured in the Russian-Jewish radical tradition. However, in the wake of the Six-Day War he appears to have succumbed to an uncritical, quasi-mystical enthusiasm for the history and religion of the Jewish people, a development doubly upsetting because this new faith, while basing itself on the Hebrew Scriptures, gives no sign of belief in their divine provenance.

Thus Livneh writes grandiloquently of the Jewish people as a phenomenon "unto itself," not a product of evolution like all other peoples but one which burst upon history as a full-fledged civilization. The Jews, Livneh argues, have throughout the millennia pursued a separate and self-contained history, and hence Zionism is not to be seen as a specific form of modern nationalism adapted to Jewish circumstances, but as "an exclusive Jewish phenomenon in the historical cycle of dispersion and return." For Livneh, the Return to Zion is not in the least to be attributed to political forces but solely to the religious longing for Zion which was an age-old characteristic of Jews everywhere. Herzl, Pinsker, Borochov, and other early Zionist thinkers are hardly mentioned in the book, while scores of obscure rabbinical pronouncements on the Return to Zion are cited repeatedly.

Now, while it is obvious that religious sentiments helped to keep the flicker of Jewish hope alive over the generations, this is insufficient, to say the least, as an explanation of the social and political forces that created a secular Jewish society in the Land of Israel in the 19th and 20th centuries. But then, Livneh does not think that a secular Jewish society *has* been established in Israel. The "pioneers of the labor movement," he writes, "did not move away from traditional Judaism when they came to Palestine"—a statement that would certainly have been disputed by the pioneers themselves (unless we are to allow a meaningless latitude to the term "traditional"), to say nothing of the view of them held by the Orthodox rabbinical establishment. But for Livneh, a belief in the "traditional" character of the *chalutzim* seems necessary, part and parcel of his vision of present-day Israel as an island of virtue standing outside of and apart from the decadent civilization of the West. Western culture, according to Livneh, means "the pursuit of pleasure and the attachment to the passing moment, the worship of material abundance, sexual exhibitionism and total permissiveness, the sprawling megalopolis, and alienation from humanity and from the Creation"; "Israel, insofar as it is Israel," he writes, "negates the contemporary Western conceptual world and its resultant style of life." This would be an admirable negation, undoubtedly, but in fact in its programmatic aspect it is more characteristic of traditional Islam than of traditional Judaism, and as a description of present-day Israeli reality it is simply ludicrous. At moments like this Livneh seems to have abandoned the world of fact altogether and entered the world of fantasy.

On the other hand, in his discussion of the Arab question Livneh strikes closer to the truth than many liberals in Israel and abroad. Perhaps because of his own fundamentalist faith, he sees clearly the uncompromising nature of traditional Arab culture and the difficulty this can pose for Arabs who might otherwise wish to pursue a rapprochement with Israel. Yet Livneh's pessimism in this regard, however justified by the facts, can lead too easily to an unjustified posture of resignation when it comes to assessing the realistic chances for peace in the Middle East. His doctrine of Jewish uniqueness carries with it an implied denial of Jewish membership in the general family of man, Arab man included, and such theological flights of fancy have no place in an already difficult political situation.

FROM Livneh's Spenglerian heights we descend to the more pedestrian but realer world of Gad Yaacobi, author of *The Power of Quality*.† Yaacobi, at the age of thirty-seven, is Deputy Minister of Transportation and

* The Hebrew name of the movement is *Ha-Tnua le-ma'an Eretz Yisrael ha-Shlema*, which is usually rendered incorrectly in English as "The Movement for the Greater Israel." Whoever was originally responsible for the particular formulation may have been motivated by a quest for facile historical parallels, but he must also stand accused of inserting his own ideological commentary into the translation. *Shlema* connotes "entire" or "complete," not "great."

† *Otzmata shel Eichut*, Shikmona Publishing Co., Haifa.

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one of the younger members of Israel's political elite. A *moshavnik* from Kfar Vitkin, Yaacobi has long been close to Moshe Dayan and is today regarded as his unofficial spokesman. When Dayan was Minister of Agriculture, Yaacobi was his assistant; later he moved to head the Center for Agricultural Planning and Development. He followed Dayan into the political wastelands of the Rafi party, where he headed the Economic Committee. Like many of Rafi's other Young Turks, his public image is that of a science-oriented technocrat, but the fact that he comes out of the *moshav* movement has perhaps made him more socially conscious than someone like Shimon Peres, who nowadays seems like a relic of the American 1960's with his uncritical and naive belief in the problem-solving powers of "science."

One of the major contributions of the Rafi party to the common luggage of labor ideology in Israel has been its emphasis on the need for more conscious planning, and though it can be argued that in his book Yaacobi does no more than rehearse the necessity for such planning (without showing how it can be achieved within the existing structure), the fact that his critique comes from within the Israeli establishment is itself symptomatic of the helpful nature of the debate now going on in the country. For Yaacobi, the major stumbling block within Israel to long-range planning is the rigidity of the political system, particularly the internal party structure and even more particularly the machinery-ridden Labor party whose major component, Mapai, has been plagued by internal splits.

Two traumatic rifts took place within Mapai in the 1960's—the Lavonite split of Min Hayesod and the Ben-Gurionite split of Rafi—and both originated in a critique of the party structure. The subsequent merger of the various labor parties—Mapai, Achdut Haavoda, and Rafi—into the United Labor party was a tremendous achievement, mainly because for the first time it gave Israel a broadly-based, pluralistic labor party, where different factions could openly vie for power and influence in a manner reminiscent of the British Labour party rather than of the old Mapai of Ben-Gurion's day, with its virtually Leninist democratic centralism. However, the price for this step forward was the retention of power on the local and regional level by the leaders of numerous interest groups. Israel thus remains burdened with a centralized and self-perpetuating political elite joined to an immovable chain of quasi-feudal baronies that cannot be broken up. The result is a political scientist's nightmare of coalitions within coalitions, each seeking consensus and cooperation and engaged in an endless give-and-take which ultimately frustrates any attempt to break up the unwieldy conglomeration of interests.

Yaacobi, writing from the inside, has some trenchant things to say about the shortcomings of the political system and the consequent relative impotence of the legislative process, but his most interesting remarks deal with the future of the territories under Israeli control since 1967. It is here that he may justly be considered not only to be speaking his own mind but also to reflect Dayan's thinking on the subject. As Dayan is famous for his reluctance to enunciate long-range policy, and for his frequently enigmatic if not self-contradictory pronouncements,* Yaacobi can serve as a helpful guide to the piecemeal and pragmatic bent that characterizes Dayan's politics.

THE basic message is that peace, *real* peace, is not around the corner, but that Israel's present policies are laying the groundwork for the future structure of Israeli-Arab relations. The victory of 1967, Yaacobi argues, gave Israel an opportunity to create an unprecedented network of relations with a million Palestinian Arabs. The relative liberalism of Israel's military administration and the present economic prosperity in the occupied territories have laid the foundation for a kind of relationship that was inconceivable before the Six-Day War. During the years 1968-69, for example, the per-capita GNP rose by 36 per cent in Judea and Samaria and by 49 per cent in the Gaza Strip; in the same period the employment rate for adult males in Gaza rose from 64 per cent to 96 per cent.

These are impressive statistics, and though Yaacobi may be overly optimistic in assessing the role of economic factors alone in blunting Arab enmity toward Israel, the figures do indicate that for the first time since 1948 a concerted effort has been made to improve the lot of the refugees. Especially in Gaza, refugees have for the first time begun to approach the income level of the resident population (the latter is also rising), and the fact that this is being accomplished under an Israeli administration and in the teeth of terrorist attempts to perpetuate the plight of the refugees must be counted a tremendous achievement. As Yaacobi suggests, undramatic efforts of this sort do more for the cause of peace than any grandiose plans for an overreaching settlement. The same can be said for the Open-Bridges policy, which not only enables Arabs from the occupied territories to visit Jordan and other Arab countries, but also encourages Arabs, mainly Palestinians, to visit their relatives and friends in the territories and in Israel. Thus—another example of growing normalization—in 1971 more than 106,000 such visitors from all over the Arab world came to Israel and the West Bank and Gaza (as compared with a mere 16,000 in 1968). Certainly few people in 1967 would

* See "Dayan as Politician" by Hillel Halkin in COMMENTARY, January 1973.—ED.

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have predicted a steadily increasing flood of Arab tourists to Israel as one of the consequences of an Israeli victory!

That these trends can create problems for Israel, of conscience and otherwise, is evidenced by the concern of people like Yitzhak Ben-Aharon over the entry of West Bank and Gaza Arabs into the Israeli labor force, as well as by the fact that a number of young Jewish Israelis, some of them Sabras, were recently apprehended, tried, and subsequently sentenced for their spying activities on behalf of Syrian intelligence. The typical Israeli attitude of "it-can't-happen-here" was visibly shaken by the latter event, but it is possibly naive to suppose that the ambiguities of the present situation should not give rise to some unhappy results. Nevertheless, Israel's presence in the areas under its control has caused perceptible and, in some cases, irreversible social trends, and these are responsible, among other things, for the relative impotence of the terrorist organizations in their home soil as compared to their heyday in 1969-70.

Yaacobi, although he is not overly optimistic about the present prospects for peace, sets great store by the pragmatic gains that have been made toward stabilization. In an indirect attempt to accommodate Ben-Aharon's qualms, he also suggests that Israel should encourage investment in the occupied territories, a measure that Dayan has been urging for some time and one that has been consistently opposed by anti-annexationists like Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir, mainly because it is regarded as "creeping annexation." However, it should be pointed out that the triumph of the opposition view was ultimately responsible for the incursion of Arab labor into Israel. Had the West Bank, for example, been the recipient of Israeli investments, the labor supply would have been channelled into local opportunities rather than having to seek work in Israel.

Yaacobi also looks with favor on the establishment of a representative body of the West Bank population as an effective way of further encouraging Israeli-Arab cooperation. His discourse on this difficult subject is free from the moralistic fervor which characterizes so many Israelis, "hawks" and "doves" alike, and is, in a way, a hallmark of the level-headed attitude of the second-generation Israeli; even if he occasionally eschews some of the thornier moral issues involved, his pragmatism is a welcome antidote to the self-righteous fulminations of some of his opponents.

If Livneh and Yaacobi have set off tremors of debate in Israel, a third book, *Land of Splendor* by Arie Eliav,* can be said to have caused an explosion; it has sold over 20,000 copies within the last half-year, and at the present writing has gone into four printings. The basic proposal it sets forth is in itself neither remarkable nor original: Eliav advocates recognition of the Palestinians' right to self-determination, either in an independent state made up of the West Bank and Gaza or in some form of association with Jordan. What accounts for the furor is the proposal's source: Eliav, at the age of fifty-one, is a full-fledged member of the Israeli establishment. A former commander of illegal immigrant ships that ran the British blockade on Palestine after World War II, he headed one of Israel's more successful regional planning projects, Lachish, and was involved in the rescue of the Jewish community of Port Said during the Sinai Campaign of 1956. He also served as First Secretary of the Israeli Embassy in Moscow, wrote a book on Soviet Jewry, and became a member of the Knesset and later Secretary General of the Israel Labor party.

Eliav's argument follows by-now familiar lines.† Israel, he charges, has always underestimated the Palestinian component in the Arab-Israel equation. Indeed, according to Eliav, the Palestinians were responsible for the escalation of the conflict which led to the Six-Day War. As for the current terror campaign directed against Israel, criminal as this is, it nonetheless attests to the consciousness Palestinians have of themselves as a political-national entity. Historical debates over whether the Palestinians "existed" in the past are therefore anachronistic and irrelevant, in Eliav's view, since the simple fact is that the Palestinians now appear able to frustrate any arrangement achieved between Israel and the Arab states that does not take them into account. The Palestinians, Eliav concludes, are the crucial variable in the network of Israeli-Arab relations.

Eliav, unlike a number of Israeli "doves" who start from similar premises but then jump to the conclusion that the key to peace lies exclusively in Israel's hands, is well aware that there are no short-cuts to peace with the Palestinians. Indeed, his "dovishness" is joined to a hard-headed realism. Part of the responsibility for the present impasse, Eliav argues, must be laid at the door of the Arabs' perception of Zionism and of Israel—the so-called "Crusader Complex" according to which Israel is seen by the Arabs as a transient phenomenon destined eventually to crumble in the fashion of the old Christian

* *Eretz ha-Zvi*, Am Oved, Tel Aviv. The title in English is given on an overleaf as *Glory in the Land of the Living*, which strikes me as a pompous distortion of the original. (*Eretz ha-Zvi* is one of the traditional poetic appellations of the Land of Israel.) An English translation of the volume is planned by the Jewish Publication Society of America.

† The essence of this argument can be found in Eliav's essay "New Targets for Israel," in *Israel and the Palestinians* (edited by Shlomo Avineri), St. Martin's Press, 1971, pp. 68-75.

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Crusader Kingdom. Ultimately, Eliav shares the more or less conventional wisdom of most Israelis—there is nobody on the other side with whom to make peace. The crucial difference between his position and the prevailing quietistic pessimism is that Eliav does not stop at this realization. Even if the options are limited, he maintains, Israel should not foreclose them in advance, and he suggests a number of steps to be taken that would still leave openings for eventual rapprochement.

For example, Eliav proposes that Israel make it publicly known that it recognizes the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and that it views the future relations between the two national entities as based on mutual recognition. There is room, he contends, in the historical Land of Israel for two states, Israeli and Palestinian, and Israel should unilaterally declare this to the Arabs. (Calling it an Israeli "Balfour Declaration," as Eliav does, will probably strike the wrong note with the Arabs, but that is a minor detail.) The two-state plan can serve not only as an abstract statement on intention but as a guiding principle of Israeli policy. Thus, even if the present status quo continues into the unforeseeable future, it would be clear that this does not imply any automatic drift on Israel's part toward overall annexation of the occupied territories.

When it comes to specifics—even though these are only of theoretical significance—it would seem that Eliav's scheme is far from minimalist in its prescriptive aspects. For instance, he maintains that there must always be a Jewish emotional attachment to *Eretz Yisrael,* the historic Land of Israel *in its totality.* This territory, which he calls the Land of the Twelve Tribes, comprises not only Israel proper and the occupied territories, but also Transjordan and parts of Lebanon and Syria. However, such attachment, he is careful to note, setting himself apart here from the Movement for the Entire Land of Israel, does not imply title to, or justification for political control over, the whole area. Whatever the future boundaries of Israel will be, they must fall considerably short of encompassing all of the historical land. Provided that Israelis have freedom of access to Hebron and its sacred Jewish sites, for instance, the city itself along with its Arab population could well remain, in Eliav's view, under Arab administration. But though Eliav opposes overall annexation, he does envisage the possibility of Jews living in those parts of the historical Land of Israel that would revert to Arab rule. Under conditions of peace, he holds, there would be no excuse for a *Judenrein* Palestine or Jordan. If Jews live in New York and Moscow, why not in Hebron?

The argument is sound and its political edge obvious. Jewish settlement in Hebron, or the establishment of new kibbutzim in the Jordan Valley, should not, according to the Eliav scheme, be viewed, either by Israel or the Arabs, as a step toward *de facto* "creeping annexation," nor should such habitations become mortgages on an eventual Israeli withdrawal from the areas in question. Eliav also advocates the permanent demilitarization of the West Bank, with an Israeli military presence in the Jordan Valley for an undetermined period as an anti-guerrilla measure. On the question of Jerusalem, he is willing to grant the Arabs special rights in the Moslem holy places, but otherwise Jerusalem is to remain undivided, the capital of Israel. On Sinai, he also proposes demilitarization with some sort of Israeli presence at Sharm el Sheikh.

Actually, with respect to Jerusalem and Sinai, there is very little difference between Eliav and Golda Meir, and for that reason alone one may assume that his general views will find as deaf a response among the Arabs as does official Israeli government policy. For all that, Eliav's book has done its work. It has offered Israeli readers a humane and liberal vision of a solution to a difficult political situation, and the debate it has set off can only be to the good.

THIS debate will intensify in coming months, as this year's election campaign moves into full swing. Israelis will go to the polls in late fall to elect a new Knesset; although nobody expects the dominant Labor party to be ousted from office, the elections will help decide the nature of the leadership that will succeed Mrs. Meir—this, whether she herself finally decides to head the Labor party list in the elections or withdraws from public life before then. The issues raised by Livneh, Yaacobi, and Eliav are sure to figure in the elections—as counters in the inter-party struggle, as subjects for debate within the Labor party itself, and as a major factor in the way individual Israelis cast their ballot. It is clear that, with a greater degree of confidence in their military and political strength, Israelis have now begun to look inward, to become preoccupied with problems that strike at the very heart of their social enterprise. Their discussion of these problems is taking place within the broad lines of an essential consensus, but perhaps for that very reason is fraught with implications for the future. To the extent that the fall elections both reflect and render some sort of decision on these matters, they will go a long way toward setting the course of Israeli society for many years to come.

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Marriage and Household

Sonya Rudikoff

AFTER so many centuries, and so much reflection and experience, after so many marriages, is there anything left to be said on the subject? Perhaps, as T. S. Eliot remarked of Dante, the very vastness of the subject, and its antiquity, insure a kind of perennial possibility for comment. In fact, the more pressing question to be asked is whether anything *useful* can be said about marriage, that is, can the subject itself be disentangled from the very interesting subheadings which always seem to join the discussion? I mean, for example, the most obvious matters: sexuality, social role and function, the history of social institutions, the family, the extended family, the education of women, sex roles, women's rights, women's liberation, housework, "alternative life styles," the future of marriage, and whether marriage should have a future. The innocent inquirer may think that marriage is the subject, but, before long, day care, primate behavior, and varieties of orgasm will be trotted out. And they all seem so intimately related, like members of a family, that you can't get at one without the other.

Each of these related matters is fascinating, weighty, worthwhile, and entirely relevant, although not perhaps in every single discussion. Perhaps, then, there is no longer a subject of marriage? Indeed, when some friends heard that I was writing about marriage, they wondered whether anyone at all was getting married these days, except for ex-priests and nuns, and homosexuals. It is a curious twist, actually, that homosexuals seem extremely anxious to get married and to have their marriages solemnized by religious counselors—no woodland trysts, but ministers, vows, and receptions. But in fact quite a few others seem to be getting married too, and remarried. Marriage continues to be attractive, so much so that it galls a feminist like Shulamith Firestone: irritably she wonders why it goes on and on ensnaring willing victims, when its dangers and contradictions have been so amply demonstrated. In *The Dialectic of Sex** she demands angrily, "What is keeping marriage so alive?" With all sorts of other possible arrangements—communal living, *ménages à trois* or more, sexual combinations of every sort, celibacy—why should anyone trouble to get married?

Apparently, some people prefer it to the more modern kinds of relationships. Jessie Bernard, the well-known sociologist, believes marriage has a future because men and women will continue to want some sort of commitment and intimacy.† Future forms of marriage may be quite different, but there will surely be serious relationships. Some observers insist that marriage must change its forms if it is to survive: the O'Neills,** for instance, believe that the best kind of marriage is "open" rather than "closed," that is, flexible, not tight, free of circumscribed sex roles or rigid beliefs and expectations, rules of behavior, prohibitions, and renunciations. Mimi and John Lobell†† believe in "free marriage" which, in their experience of it, means remaining together but maintaining and developing sexual relationships with others of both sexes. Caroline Bird and others have spoken of new "androgynous" relationships, in which the partners are only very slightly differentiated as to sexual function. There are also, as we know, group marriages of more than two persons, although these miss the legitimacy of the old marriage. And, within the boundaries of more familiar unions, new forms of relationship are envisaged: some couples create a new hyphenated name, some add to the marriage contract their own words or their own set of obligations, either lyrical and general or quite specific and spelled out, as in the famous marriage contract of the Shulmans, published in *Ms.* magazine and widely discussed elsewhere, in which the two parties bound themselves to a host of domestic obligations, such as alternate days of shopping, housework, helping children with homework, and so forth.

Many of the new forms are suggested in the individually composed marriage services which have become so familiar recently. Couples will

SONYA RUDIKOFF has written for *Partisan Review, Dissent, Arts,* and other periodicals. Miss Rudikoff's articles in COMMENTARY include "O Pioneers: Reflections on the Whole Earth People" (July 1972) and "Why Some Children Don't Speak" (October 1972).

* Bantam, 242 pp., $1.25 (paper).

† *The Future of Marriage,* World, 367 pp., $9.95.

** *Open Marriage,* by Nena and George O'Neill, Lippincott, 287 pp., $6.95.

†† *John and Mimi: A Free Marriage,* St. Martin's Press, 159 pp., $5.95.

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take pains to choose verses from *The Prophet* or statements from Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, and will specify the ways they will preserve each other's individuality and "personhood." Anyone who is invited to a wedding nowadays must be prepared not for a ceremony but an Our Relationship talk by the principals.

Yet another new form that has been proposed is the two-or-more-stage marriage; that is, instead of expecting one marriage contracted in youth to continue forever, a more complex design for different kinds of marriages at different stages of life is assumed. Thus, a young couple, in college or graduate school, might marry with the understanding that theirs would be a temporary union, to carry them through their youth, while they were engaged in developing vocations, traveling, experimenting with life. Later, when they decided to have a family, another marriage might be more suitable, perhaps—even—with another partner. This explicit arrangement would avoid the emotional damage, the social cost and recriminations, of divorce and yet would insure the survival of the family, of marriage, and of youthful exploration. Margaret Mead has been associated with this proposal, and it has been welcomed by many observers.

Another example of a new form of marriage, achieved as before by keeping the old marriage but dividing its aspects differently, is the variant on group marriage known as swinging: the marriage remains almost indistinguishable from others, with no new concepts of role or personhood, but simply involves deliberate sexual inclusiveness. In this version, there is no desire for any "relationship" or "commitment"; one simply advertises for sexual partners as for cleaning women, and couples make up foursomes for sex as if for tennis or bridge. Many swingers even pride themselves on preserving their marriages through these arrangements.

All these ostensibly new forms of marriage have many adherents, and are amply explored in books, pamphlets, television discussions, and conversation. A book like *Marriage: For and Against** examines many of them, and Jessie Bernard painstakingly explores all the historical and statistical material, sociopsychological ideology, feminist argument, and available evidence about "alternative life styles." The important criterion for assessing any of these new forms seems to be some variant of sincerity, and it is this value which Carl Rogers, in *Becoming Partners*,† finds of the greatest importance. No one wishes any longer "to be judgmental" (a phrase which has replaced the simple infinitive), no one seeks for himself the authority to be prescriptive about marital behavior, or accords it to others, and there are few shared beliefs about what marriage should be. Certainly there are no sanctions against any sort of behavior at all, and no one has anything to fear from his neighbor's or society's view of behavior. Sincerity, fulfillment, and self-realization are the modern measures of relationship, and the lack of these would everywhere be accepted as an adequate and praiseworthy reason for ending a relationship. Anyone who dissolved a marriage because it provided no growth or opportunity for personhood would be applauded. Rogers, in speaking of his own marriage of more than forty-seven years, considers that the most profound statement he can make of it is that "each has always been willing and eager for the other to *grow*." The horticultural image has taken on hidden moral meaning: for want of other sanctions, the failure to grow, to fulfill one's self, to be sincere, has become the only offense against decency or the social order (if indeed there is a social order).

Marriage is one of the oldest and most enduring institutions, and, like religion, it appears in every known human society, whether primitive or advanced. Not only that, but marriage has always had a religious or sacramental character. Until recently, there was no distinction between civil and sacramental; for most of our ancestors, life itself was sacramental and so was everything in life. In Jewish and Christian religious writings, images of bride, bridegroom, marriage, and union suggest the most ineffable feelings and beliefs. But though the imagery is still part of our language, most people no longer ascribe a religious meaning to marriage, and the sacramental and ceremonial have been transferred to the wedding celebration. Probably only Quaker marriages are today solemnized in the same way that they were three hundred years ago, with sacrament in silence. Everywhere else, the ceremony and vows have changed, the procedures, the persons involved, the setting, and, of course, the consequences and obligations implied in the union. Even the barest civil ceremony, conducted by judge or clerk, in the most unlikely or uncongenial or incongruous setting, is nevertheless an explicit legalization of a relationship which until then had nothing specific predicated of it. It may have been an affair, a friendship, a complicated involvement, but from the moment it is a *marriage* it becomes a social act of great importance, linked to all other marriages.

Many do not see it this way, despite having chosen the public social act, and they continue to think of the marriage as having only a private meaning. A family is implied in marriage, not as a certainty, but a probability, and this too is a link with society and the future, although many consider the family to be a private matter also. The marriage contract, whether viewed as a civil or religious contract, can be abrogated, as a pub-

* Edited by Harold Hart, Hart, 285 pp., $7.50.
† Delacorte, 243 pp., $7.95.

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lic and social act, and again there are those who argue for the privacy of divorce or separation, even though divorce is as old as marriage, and societies have always had rules about it too. If, in the past, ministers, priests, and rabbis who performed the ceremonies counseled those who were unhappy in marriage, they have been relieved of that responsibility in recent times by the entirely new profession of marriage counseling and therapy. In fact, the clergy now study marital counseling themselves, and use its insights, while the counselors have adopted the accents of spiritual guidance. *"The wo that is in mariage,"* as the Wife of Bath called it, provides all sorts of grounds for divorce, and the tendency nowadays is toward liberalizing divorce to eliminate the duplicity of the past. Almost anyone can marry, and can marry whom he or she pleases, so long as they are not feeble-minded, syphilitic, under-age, or already married. No permission is required, no completion of anything, no preparation, no accumulation of funds.

MARRIAGE, in short, can apparently be anything that anyone wants it to be. The vows of marriage ceremonies speak of the marriage as beginning in consequence of the contract, "from this day forward," and in one way or another touch upon the salient features: to live according to the laws of Moses or Christ, to have and to hold, to love, honor, and cherish, in sickness and in health, according to universal custom, for better or for worse, and—the most difficult ones—"forsaking all others" and "until death do us part." Permanence and exclusivity are the marital specifications most open to question nowadays. Most people who have serious thoughts about marriage would probably believe that some sort of love and caring was essential, as well as intimacy, and some sort of responsibility. But permanence? This is no longer thought healthy or necessary, and it may close off possibilities if one's own "growth" or that of one's partner produces unexpected consequences. Exclusivity also interferes with growth, and there are countless modern arguments for the wisdom of not restricting one's choices or experiences. As Mimi Lobell puts it:

> . . . I thought the most perfect marriage was one that allowed complete freedom, because then if the couple stayed with each other, they were really meant to be together. . . . It seemed I could dissolve the boundaries completely if I were free to have sex with other people, to experience that fullness of pleasure and communication with them.

As the Lobells developed this kind of modern freedom, it was a completely open, agreed-upon, principled, even conscientious program for acquiring new or unusual sexual experiences with other individuals or couples, in groups, in triads, in public, in private, while being filmed, under drugs, in various settings, and with various accompaniments, such as masturbating while reading *The Pearl*, and so forth. What still remains to be attempted, at the end of their report, are more homosexual activities, individually and in groups, and more sexual activity combined with drugs. The explicit and deliberate aspects of their program are as far as possible from adultery or even the convenient "arrangements" which fuel many marriages. They are determined to share every nuance, to attack the obvious problems such as jealousy, and to be as experimental as possible. Interestingly enough, they do not contemplate ever divorcing, and they speak often of growing old together; the permanence of their union is not in question at all, despite their radical challenge to other marital principles.

The Lobells insist they are not "swingers," they do not "swap," they don't advertise for partners, they don't spend the weekend driving around the metropolitan area meeting unknown couples, as the California swingers do, having anonymous sex on Saturday and then on Monday going back to their high-level jobs at Bechtel or Boeing. The Lobells want deep and real relationships with their sexual partners, but they also want mixtures of everything. They are both architects, associated with various new waves in the architectural culture, especially with the Philadelphia architect, Robert Venturi, and his aesthetic notions.* Venturi boldly announced his preference for ambiguous, mixed, hybrid forms, inclusive, complex, the sacred and profane together, as against the articulated, pure, unified clarity of the International Style. The Lobells were two of his most earnest students and, as Mimi observes, "We first adopted this sensibility in our awareness of architecture and our environment, then it became a way of life, an almost tactile appreciation in our lives of the textures of ambiguity, juxtaposition, contradiction, and paradox."

Not everyone is so explicitly programmatic as the Lobells, but there is ample evidence that exclusivity is no longer the important part of a marriage commitment. Permanence, too, has disappeared as an unalterable specification. As Jessie Bernard points out, when life expectancy was much shorter, to promise to remain with one partner until parted by death was not overly ambitious, but rather realistic. In the same sense, when Herrick urged "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may," he had in mind the old roses that bloomed only once in June, not all summer as our Hybrid Perpetuals do. Marriages based on romantic love cannot rely on permanence because the marriage in effect ceases to be viable once the love wanes. The "typical" American romantic marriage joined two unlikely people who had never known each other and whose only

* Venturi counters the familiar and austere "less is more" with his own "less is a bore."

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bond was the inexplicable intensity of their attachment for each other, which afflicted them like the London flu. Astute and clever people no longer make marriages based on such emotions, and Europeans and ancient Asian peoples never have done so.

Thus, as the specific nature of marriage becomes clouded by the sloughing off of all that it has entailed in the past, as the sacramental character of it wanes, and as permanence and exclusivity have been both broadened and narrowed beyond any attributable meaning, all the once powerful and inexplicable feelings become attached to the idea of commitment itself. And amid such a powerful and awesome conception of commitment, it becomes clear why there has been such an increase in separation as a way of dealing with troubled relationships.* In the past people might separate because of extreme discomfort or danger, as in living with a mad, brutal, or drunken person, or because certain technical, legal, or financial circumstances prevented divorce. Nowadays, separation is a sort of halfway house, a step into fresh air out of the overheated smoky room, a relief, a relaxation, a vacation. Separation generally leads to divorce, perhaps because that overpowering or terrifying or claustral commitment is not a purgatory anyone returns to willingly.

The "no-fault" view of divorce, for all its perfectly reasonable procedures, is really a way of dealing with the fact that something more profound than the mere breaking of a contract is involved when people divorce. Indeed, with many modern marriages, there is simply no way out. The Lobells, for example, with their free marriage, are absolutely trapped. There is no possibility of their leaving each other, there would be no grounds for terminating their marriage, because they have already decided that all the usual reasons will not apply to them. In many other modern marriages, or non-marital commitments, there is no way to determine whether the commitment has been fulfilled or violated: can it be said with certainty that someone has "ceased to grow" or is not respecting "personhood"? The requirements are so unclear that anything or nothing can be adduced to support a claim, and, indeed, there is no claim. Anna Karenina knew that her affair with Vronsky could destroy her marriage and her position in the world, could alienate her from her child; in the end, it cost her her life. If she had been married to John Lobell, she could have taken on Vronsky alone, or with his whole regiment, and lost nothing!

Fidelity to one partner is thought to be a restriction on freedom and an interference with self-fulfillment, and yet the proposed alternatives of unbounded relationships, eliminating "mystique," "custom," "tradition," or "sacrament," in favor of freedom and honesty, are as a consequence either as tight as a steel trap, or as depthless as a tennis round robin or the bridge tournaments of elderly couples on ocean voyages. Most of the people who write in praise of their open and free relationships seem unappealing in the extreme: who would want to identify with them or be involved with them? Would Balzac's Madame Hanska fall in love with Carl Rogers from reading *his* books? Or with John Lobell?

ALTHOUGH more marriages nowadays seem to be performed by clergymen, often hip ministers or "modern" rabbis, or, alternatively, very old-fashioned ones, their doctrine may not be part of anyone's daily life or conduct. The clergyman seems indistinguishable from the guests, and nothing prepares us for the moment when he steps forward in the garden and begins, all of a sudden, "Dearly Beloved. . . ," or something of the sort. The Navajo or Hopi ceremonies, the dawn or midnight, garden or woodland nuptials, the Our Relationship sermons by the bridal pair, all borrow sanction and dignity from a sacramental tradition which is probably dropped as unceremoniously as possible after the ceremony. The couple married in the woods do not live by the law of the woods, the Hopi vows do not make a Hopi marriage in a modern California setting, the girl who circles seven times around the groom or the groom who stamps on a glass may ignore the imperatives of their actions, and their conduct after the marriage may bear no relation to the ceremony that made it; indeed, no rules of conduct for the future can be deduced from the ceremony. The couple is unlikely to say, as Thomas and Mary Ellwood did of their Quaker marriage in 1669: "We sensibly felt the Lord with us and joining us, the sense whereof remained with us all our lifetime, and was of very good service and very comfortable to us on all occasions."

Although marriages used to require initial sponsorship of both religious and social authority, there are no longer any such agencies which enforce the marriage license in the way that, for example, licenses to drive a car are enforced, or licenses to operate a liquor store or a hairdressing establishment. In the past, society itself, through customs and social reinforcements, acted to support marriages and the idea of marriage, just as society continues to enforce the proper practice of certain professions and trades—by periodic inspection, by maintenance of certain standards, and by occasional exemplary punishment for infractions. But marriage is a contract that is unenforceable, a license without requirements. Imagine if the marriage license were granted like a driver's license, with known penalties and with the possibility of losing it altogether!

* See, for example, *Separation*, by Eve Baguedor, Simon and Schuster, 210 pp., $5.95.

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In fact, some observers, troubled by the increase in divorce and marital laxity, have suggested that marriage be made much more difficult as divorce becomes easier. Vanished social customs used to make marriage difficult: young people had to wait until a dowry was accumulated, a house built, an apprenticeship completed, until older brothers or sisters married, or a farm could be purchased, or until parental permission was granted. These customs, of great antiquity, served not only to keep the average age of marriage rather high, but provided a kind of informal licensing and sanctioning of the young couple. Only very recently, and primarily in this country, have young people rushed to marry before their education was completed, or before they could deserve social approbation, and probably only since World War II have parents encouraged this and even supported the pair. Thus, the already lengthy adolescence of American young people was prolonged still further, engendering perhaps even more confusion.

Is marriage the hell that Kathrin Perutz* insists it is? A "ghetto of lunacy," an anachronism, the "end of self-development," "an unnatural death of the spirit," "a kind of lockjaw," the end of all friendship? Is the trouble with the institution, or, as the old joke has it, with the inmates? Or should the whole thing be abandoned, the institution abolished? If the sexual revolution has solved the problem of sex, as people assume, and if women's liberation is to insure personal independence, is there any reason to prolong the life of this anachronism, about which the best thing Miss Perutz can find to say is that it is a sort of continuing conversation, and the parties to it are lucky if they can pledge not to do each other harm?

Advanced thought has attempted to reform marriage by changing the terms of the contract, liberalizing the commitment, varying it in every possible way, and even by making escape from marriage easier through simplified divorce procedures. Society has cooperated by abandoning its judgments and sanctions of marital, nonmarital, or extra-marital unions. Every sort of condition or circumstance that once made marriage intolerable has been removed or remedied —why then the books, the fuss, the issue, the problem? Why does Miss Perutz summon accents of Lawrentian anger and rhetoric to beat a dead horse? Is it because the horse won't stay dead? She is in a fury, as Shulamith Firestone is, although with this difference, that Miss Perutz insists upon all the new conditions but wants the old passions, and Miss Firestone wants new passions as well as new conditions, but grudgingly concedes the vitality of the old ones. Both of them borrow the grand melodramatic voice of malediction and vituperation so beloved of some feminists and misogynists. Miss Perutz leaves out that staple of early feminism, how woman's health is ruined by marriage, but she spends a lot of time on abortion and venereal disease. She and Miss Firestone, like many other writers, find their sexual burden increased by the sexual revolution, and are especially appalled by the horrors of childbirth and abortion. (Midge Decter, in her bold response to the arguments of the women's-liberation movement,† quite properly calls attention to this anomaly, that the most modern young women, who demand every freedom, and recognize no masters, should be as appalled by the physical burdens of sexual life as if they lived in the Dark Ages.)

It is something of a surprise to find almost the same element in Jessie Bernard's discussion. This sociologist doesn't document the physical burden of marriage as Catherine Beecher, the early feminist, did, listing healthy and unhealthy women in New England towns in the 19th century, but she does examine the latest statistics on the rate of mental illness for married and unmarried women, and for men. The tabulation forms an important part of her argument that marriage is better for men than it is for women; her question, "Whose marriage—his or hers?" has become a commonplace in the magazine *Ms.* and among feminist writers. If marriage is not to be abandoned like an old tenement, then it must be renovated, and most of the books published suggest that it is the women's marriage that is most in need of reform. At least, it is the women's voices for reform that we are hearing most often nowadays, and the women's grievances we hear most about. Feminists argue that marriage is an enslavement for either outright sexual exploitation, or for a combined sexual and economic exploitation, complaints which closely echo Catherine Beecher, Sarah and Angelica Grimké, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the rest.

Naturally, the new feminism has accents that the old lacked, as Ellen Levine and Judith Hole make clear in their *Rebirth of Feminism.*** One can see that the enormous legal and social transformations of the last century have also affected the feminist argument. We have only to read through some of the documents, such as those in *The Oven Birds,*†† by American women between 1820 and 1920, to see that the focus of discontent has shifted and the arguments and rationalizations have changed radically. Some of the activists did not marry, or they drew up

* *Marriage Is Hell,* Morrow, 181 pp., $5.95; published in paperback as *Liberated Marriage* (Pyramid, 224 pp., $1.25).

† *The New Chastity and Other Arguments Against Women's Liberation,* Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 188 pp., $5.95.

** Quadrangle, 488 pp., $10.00.

†† Edited by Gail Parker, Doubleday-Anchor, 432 pp., $2.50 (paper).

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marriage contracts like those between Robert Owen and Mary Jane Robinson in 1832, or Henry Blackwell and Lucy Stone in 1855, and the social conditions of married women still absorbed a great deal of feminist attention. But as Misses Hole and Levine make clear in their history of the movement, women's suffrage became the important focus of the feminist movement after the Civil War, and since 1920, and certainly since World War II, the problem of marriage has been subsumed under the other questions of *women's* lives and roles. The problem of marriage for *men* does not seem to be included there.

What we have, really, is a new or renewed view which asserts that marriage is not an isolable relationship presenting certain inevitable stresses for those who enter into it. Rather, it is asserted, there are problems with sex roles, with male oppression, with sexist interpretation, with emotional, sexual, psychological, or occupational activities which affect the assignment of power in marriage. Even the relatively advanced notions about commitment may not be the problem, and even they are often discarded in the belief that they embody a hidden sexism, that the commitment asked of women is a total dedication to the man's wishes, needs, ideas of marriage, career obligations, and so forth, and therefore oppresses the woman's personhood. In all the discussion, what seems to be absolutely ignored, or given very shabby treatment, is the possibility that *every* marriage contracted can be shown to include within it sufficient grounds for divorce, that *every* marital pair are potentially incompatible and could easily separate if their relationship were regarded in a certain way, that whether they have been married five years, fifteen, or fifty, the hazards and risks are inevitable, recurrent, perennial.

One of the interesting phenomena of the present time is the dissolution of apparently happy marriages, of divorce and separation among those who had been presumed to be contented, and married long enough for their difficulties to have been ironed out. These ruptures are frequently initiated by the women themselves, attractive and capable, married fifteen or twenty or more years, with several children, with devoted and seemingly compatible husbands. What is noteworthy is that these women break up their marriages not for another man, or because their husbands have become involved with other women; instead it is for lack of "communication," or in the name of freedom and a fuller development of their own personal lives. They may go to graduate school or law school, or finish a bachelor's degree or work, or simply, in the old phase, "find themselves." Usually their children remain with them, in the role of younger siblings; their husbands are bewildered and angry; their motivation seems obscure to relatives and friends. They may have had no "grounds" for divorce in the ordinary sense, and by any rational assessment they could have none; nevertheless, they feel oppressed, encaged, unfulfilled, and although they didn't marry as child brides, and throughout their married lives they exercised great freedom—thus displaying their distance from *A Doll's House*—they do feel the need for self-discovery, and freedom. Many of them have had their revelations with the help of the women's-liberation movement. Many have stumbled into consciousness-raising sessions, or have come across feminist articles or books, or have had other involvements which have led to their new perspectives. Some suddenly discover that they have been married for years to prototypical "male chauvinist pigs." Now they live under the aegis of a new vision of life and of themselves, from which there is no going back.

We don't know exactly how widespread these developments are. Apparently the number of missing wives traced by detection bureaus has increased enormously, and the number of divorces has too. Still, the kinds of arguments about marriage and new relationships which are talked about are confined to quite a small group of people. When the two Yankee pitchers, Kekich and Peterson, exchanged families recently, they were extremely concerned lest their fans regard it as "a cheap sex thing" or as swinging, when it was really very respectable and serious. The adoption of open marriage, free marriage, liberation, "growing," commitment, and similar experiences is far more narrowly characteristic of a fairly specific segment of young and middle-aged people, employed in the professions and managerial levels of the vast and affluent bureaucracy. Blue-collar marriages, the marriages of black people of all classes, the marriages of the elderly, the poor, and the marriages of countless others, these are not the subject of recent discussions. The O'Neills, Carl Rogers, John and Mimi Lobell, and the rest speak to a certain audience, or represent a specific constituency, the agents, engineers, and beneficiaries of the new American prosperity, who have the self-consciousness to examine their own lives and marriages without being hampered by either tradition or social and economic constraints.

They have quite a lot of time and money too. It is always striking in these books to see how much time the participants have. John and Mimi Lobell not only put in a day's work in architectural offices, but are always ready for experiments, seem to need no sleep, and never seem to have to do laundry, or visit relatives, or go to the library. And all those other couples who solicit our attention from the pages of Carl Rogers's book: Roy and Sylvia, Denise and Eric, Gail and Dick, and the rest, they have a lot of time to

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devote to their relationships, and an obsessive desire to talk about them. Their jobs and careers or vocations never seem absorbing, they have few other relationships or pastimes which give them any sort of pleasure or interest, little political involvement, are always ready for self-analysis and self-concern. John and Mimi respond to new things, drugs or sexual arrangements, or even projects such as the filming of their sexual occasions, and its subsequent screening, followed by a few exhibits and happenings, but this is the sort of thing that can be improvised; it is hard to see John or Mimi dealing with a construction company on a site, or reviewing drawings to meet a cost analysis. And there always seems to be a lot of money: enough money to separate and run two establishments and not really be pinched, enough money not to have to take a job seriously, enough money to go on trips for entirely personal reasons, enough money for John and Mimi to think about buying his parents' town house ($200,000 at least). In other words, time, money, and no compelling other goals or constraints or obligations—the new prosperity without the old ideology.*

IT SHOULD be clear that what has really fueled the second wave of feminism, and all the changes in ideas of marriage, is not so much individual discontent as immense social change misunderstood and undigested. Each generation grows up into a situation not of its own making, and proceeds to remake the world as much as possible. Obviously this is necessary and desirable and has been going on for centuries, although the process has accelerated in recent years. It's rather important, therefore, to note that these vast changes are not merely changes in ideology, but in circumstances. For example, the age at first marriage, which has been declining ever since the 17th century, remained stable for about twenty years, and then suddenly in the 1960's began to go up. The age of menarche has gone down in the last century from seventeen to 12! And the sex ratio has declined to the lowest point in the century: 94.8 men for every 100 women. In the Northeast, the figure is 92.5; in New York City 88; among the over-sixty-five population it is 72. How far ideology has been responsible for the social change we see all about us continues to intrigue and fascinate, but certainly ideology, while it may indirectly affect the birth rate, cannot determine the sex ratio, so far as we know. The ideological arguments about marriage would of course evoke no resonance if there were no life circumstances to support them.

One area in which ideology and actual changes in life circumstances have come together is that of the household. According to the current mythology our ancestors had an easier time of it living in those appealing extended families of theirs, and this simplified everything, especially marriage. Shulamith Firestone has even suggested that a solution to the problems of the nuclear family would be the formation of artificial extended families, and of course the communes have attempted to do this in various ways. The idea has become a commonplace, predictably advanced in every discussion of marriage and family. Actually, it has been amply shown that our ancestors did *not* live in multi-generational households, not even in the 17th and 18th centuries (as Peter Laslett demonstrates in *The World We Have Lost*). They lived near each other in individual households, and perhaps in small settlements, such as village, town, *shtetl,* neighborhood, community, where most people knew one another and had known one another for quite a long time; the settlements were isolated, perhaps like large extended families in that sense, but each household was not composed of a large family as we fondly imagine.

What made households of the past larger than those of the present was, quite simply, the presence of servants. No one talks about this, it is a kind of secret about the past, but servants were what made up the household, even from ancient times, when it was part of what "family" meant, and the disappearance of servants has meant the decline of the household. Even Charlotte Perkins Gilman, in her ostensible country isolation, endured it with servants; Maude Nathan left a whole household when she went out to investigate the conditions of women workers; and virtually all the early feminists were surrounded and supported by the servant network. In novels of the late 19th century or earlier, scenes of the most repellent poverty always seem to include at least some menial workers. Later it was only in scenes of the lives of immigrants that servants were not included.

The idea of the household was certainly undergoing some change before the great waves of immigration began in the late-19th century. Technology was bound to affect it. The immigrants who went into domestic service maintained the household in attenuated form, and other immigrants brought with them their large-family pattern, reinforcing the idea of the household without its most salient feature, that

* Those whose experience is limited to this group inevitably see its prominence as greater, its size larger, its cultural hegemony as more extensive than may actually be the case. Many others exist, it should be remembered; and divorce is more common in the lower class, desertion more common than separation. If the median income is $10,000, that means that half of the country still earns less than $10,000, an amount which doesn't pay for many trips and separate households. Studies by Helena Lopata, Mirra Komarovsky, and Lee Rainwater suggest that the blue-collar marriage is not regarded by its principals in the way that the O'Neills and Lobells urge, and that the same sort of fragility or disturbance so often discussed is not uniformly distributed throughout the country.

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of servants. The superwoman of the 40's and 50's—the young woman who was mother, chauffeur, gourmet cook, psychologist, mistress, handyman, teacher, financial wizard, cleaning woman, and sports companion—can be seen as attempting to sum up in her own person the entire households of the past, combining with that idea the egalitarian self-reliance of the American experience and the American dream. No European or Asian woman of the past or present would have thought of designing her life as the American wife and mother designed her marriage and household.

The idea of the household is an attractive one. The variety and complexity and comfort and completeness it suggests are restorative to contemplate, especially its self-sufficiency and independence, its freedom from enslavement to suppliers of goods and services. The spirit of joint effort, of work shared, or of general goals supported by a small group, the unified tasks, inspired communitarian impulses in the 19th century and even more in our own day. American farm life, European village life, medieval European households are all appealing; Philippe Ariès has become one of the most widely quoted sources in discussions of the modern family because his work, *Centuries of Childhood,* provides so much evidence of the special attractiveness of the household. And it is this idea—not the illusory notion of the extended family—which can be seen in the shadows behind much of the modern discontent with marriage and the family. The marriage that began in love and ends in hatred and dissension, the disordered family, the confused children, each exhibit the contemporary confusion about what the household is to be and how it is to function. The claustral nuclear family of current notoriety is a group which is so intense it fails to be a household but remains a bad dream, and the "closed" marriage may be a couple with its household background erased or not filled in. Like a pattern that ineluctably moves to complete itself, the partial households and fragmented domestic establishments of the present day seem to require more development or they disintegrate.

An additional factor in the disintegration of the household is inflation, though, like the disappearance of servants, no one speaks of it intimately. Some idea of what inflation means might be seen by listing the number of trades or skills which are pertinent to the household and its activities, and then considering the changes in price levels for articles and services over a fifty-year or thirty-year period. For example, not only did the number of servants to the number of households go down sharply, and not only have the wages of the few remaining servants risen sharply, and not only have food prices risen unbelievably, but other related increases have occurred: costs of laundry and dry cleaning, of the various repairmen, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, masons, ordinary handymen, gardeners; then, upholsterers, drapers, carpet and rug manufacturers and installers, housepainters, plasterers; all their materials, and all items of hardware, everything needed by the building trades; then, furniture, kitchen equipment, bedding; then, rents, utility rates, house prices, land costs, construction costs; then, insurance, medical costs, clothing, entertainment, travel, education, all sorts of goods and services. If every one of these increased in cost but servants had remained at a 19th-century level, then the situation would be very different, more like that in underdeveloped countries, or where manufactured goods are costly but labor and services are not. Or if wages had increased but a large number of services and necessities were provided as part of a social-welfare program, as in Sweden, the costliness of life would not seem so oppressive, or so destructive of the values of the household.

Further difficulty arises from other directions to reinforce the effects of inflation. Erosion of parental authority weakens the household's standards, and new ideologies about the needs of children introduce elemental confusion. Any mother of the 50's was expected to prefer an expressive, creative child to a clean house, and this was no problem if someone else cleaned up. Unfortunately for the mistress of the household, her parental authority vanished exactly at the same time as the servants did. The 50's also saw the rise of the peer-group as a rival not only to parents but to the school's authority as well. Then the school abdicated *its* authority and proceeded to challenge what it took to be the home's rigidity. Children who thought that their social-studies reports were more important than helping with dishes or emptying garbage did not strengthen the household, and a decade later children who see parent and school at odds with each other no longer even think social studies is important!

A mother so undermined soon finds it too exhausting to engage in discussions about family democracy or children's liberation. It is hard to urge making of beds, cleaning of rooms, doing homework, practicing piano, and fulfilling obligations, if nothing in the society reinforces those efforts and everything runs counter to this idea of household. Soon she concludes that it doesn't really matter very much to anyone except herself, then she wonders how much it really matters to her, and at that point she reenters the labor force she left ten or twenty years earlier. Everyone is away all day—why should the household matter? And why should she give up time and energy to something that doesn't matter? From there, it is not much of a jump to having been deceived by the entire culture or the entire course of history, to a sense of outrage at those who sanctioned or prescribed it or who

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didn't counsel alternative directions, and then on to a furious insistence on redressing the balance. If such a woman finds a consciousness-raising group, or reads an article or a book, she is well on her way to assigning responsibility for her oppressed state to marriage and to the man who married—read, *enslaved*—her. She may even begin to feel that her husband's oppression included imposing his own kind of sexuality upon her because it seems to have been part of her oppression. This is how a modern woman moves from housework to women's liberation in a few steps.

More than a third of all married women are now in the labor force; more than half of all working women are between the ages of thirty-four and fifty-four. Such a group constitutes what is called in other connections a "critical mass," its very existence and complexity exerting a pressure of its own. The population of the country is over 200 million, up considerably since 1940, and the number of households has increased by half, but the number of domestic workers has increased only very slightly since 1890, when the population was less than half of what it is today. In 1890 one fourth of all women who worked were domestic servants, while today only one-twentieth of working women are domestics, that is, the overwhelming 95 per cent of the 30 million working women are neither maintaining their own households nor helping to maintain other people's households. Furthermore, over a third of the nation's children have mothers who work, and this figure increased one-and-one-half times between 1960 and 1970. Marriage vows say nothing about working mothers, housework, or children who come home to an empty house, but it is clear that these demographic changes create quite a different condition for the keeping of ancient promises.

Obviously, the figures about married women in the labor force becloud the fact that women have *always* worked, but in recent years have simply followed the work out of the household, as men began to do earlier. Now that more than a third of married women have done so, the household has lost both its significance, and the time and attention previously devoted to it, but the idea remains. And despite an advanced technology, the household and its responsibilities still take an enormous amount of time. Americans are endlessly resourceful, as always, but there is nevertheless quite a lot of evidence that the households of many American families are in fact being neglected, or are minimally administered, or only tenuously maintained. At the same time, the marriage commitment is being newly interpreted to mean shared roles in the household and different conceptions of work and career for both man and woman. Like the idea of marriage, the idea of the household seems resistant, transcendent, endlessly flexible: like the willow tree in the fable, it bends with the wind but does not break. So we may wonder, how flexible will it be in this most recent encounter with revised interpretations?

THE shared-role ideology advanced as a new synthesis to most contemporary situations is perhaps a more formal term for the old idea of helpfulness, the helpmeet, and cooperation in a joint enterprise. Each person intended and pledged to do as much as possible, each to give as much as possible, not, as in the Shulman's contract, as little as might be managed, or equally divided. What has troubled women increasingly in recent years is their sense that the household is not viewed in the same way by their husbands and themselves; thus, the feminists tend to speak of man's work and career as an *escape* from the household, a free exercise of will and self-actualization at the *expense* of the marriage. Women's efforts to copy the distortion, to abandon the household and pursue their lives in the world outside, raise the question whether anyone at all ever found benefit or pleasure in the household—women, men, and children too were so clearly identified as its victims. The men thus attacked respond in appropriately defensive ways, and they might well be troubled more on their own by this distortion of their purposes. Is there no genuine man's pleasure and reward in marriage? Is there no enjoyment, no profound personal involvement for a man in the household or the family? Reason and experience indicate that there is, although current discussion centers more often on the man's predatory exploitative gains. Anyone might well wonder why men get married at all.

The idea of the household was never identical with the idea of marriage, nor were the realities themselves exactly congruent, but modern people have lost the clue to the distinctive differences. In the past, and among the less articulate, the sacramental nature of marriage was the force outside themselves that man and woman acknowledged, a meaning beyond their own will and desire and comfort. It offered the most available field of action even for the least and the humblest, with its imperatives to love the other as oneself. Although the general populace may be no more articulate now than it has ever been, most of the transcendent meanings have vanished or deteriorated. "My growth" and "your growth" and "personhood" and "self-realization" and all the rest of the modern terms are clearly without the force of the "holy estate" which most people used to believe marriage to be. Its force was not the invention of the man and woman, nor was its meaning, nor would its fate be so vulnerable to their wills; and there was a certain pleasure in this too.

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Kafka's True Will

Erich Heller

It was Kafka's last will that neither his letters nor his diaries should survive him; nor, for that matter, his unpublished stories and unfinished novels. When he made this request, he was very far from having attained that fame which, in accordance with the inescapable laws of literary scholarship and other branches of the literary trade, forces every word an author has ever written upon the attention of the reading public. And because he was at that time, despite several publications, still widely unknown, it may well be asked whether, if his last will had been fully carried out, his private utterances would have commanded any interest at all. For in that case the manuscripts of *Amerika, The Trial,* and *The Castle* would have been destroyed; and surely the constant bustle surrounding his name would be much less noisy if these books did not exist. Be that as it may, Kafka, inwardly incapable of undoing his work himself, or prevented from doing so by external circumstances, demanded of his disobediently faithful friend Max Brod that he should "burn unread" all Kafka's "diaries, manuscripts, letters. . . ." This would certainly have included the letters written during the months and years between September 20, 1912, and October 16, 1917, to Felice Bauer, a woman whom, as was at times his conviction, he wished to marry, to whom he twice became engaged and from whom he twice parted.

The instruction, as Max Brod tells us in the postscript to the first edition of the (thus vainly condemned) fragmentary novel, *The Trial,* was written in ink on an undated piece of paper, discovered, after Kafka's death in 1924, among many other papers in one of Kafka's drawers. Clearly, the "will" had received little of the care usually given to such documents. Also, the futile search for a more formal testament was not the only occasion that brought this piece of paper before Max Brod's eyes. Kafka had shown it to him before, in 1921, and told him of the mandate it contained, whereupon Brod vehemently refused ever to carry it out.

However, yet another "will" came to light when Kafka's desk was searched. Jotted down in pencil, it was again undated, but internal evidence proves that, contrary to Brod's assumption, it was produced later than the instruction written in ink (which Brod believes he saw as early as 1921), for it refers explicitly to stories that in 1921 did not yet exist. This "testament" —most probably from 1922—was not quite as destructive as the first. It gave permission, even if unenthusiastically, to withhold certain manuscripts from the *auto-da-fé*: six stories that, in any case, nobody had the power to prevent from becoming known, for five were already published, and the sixth had only just been sent to the publisher by the author himself. This list of mercy consisted of "The Judgment," "The Stoker" (the first chapter of the novel *Amerika*), "The Metamorphosis," "The Penal Colony," "A Country Doctor," and "A Hunger Artist." Again, no pardon was given to the fragmentary novels, letters, and diaries; and even with regard to the listed works, their author did not wish anybody to take much trouble for them to be "handed down to posterity"; "on the contrary, should they disappear altogether, that would please me best. Only, since they do exist, I do not wish to hinder anyone who may want to, from keeping them." It is strange that, not long after he had written this, he himself felt so inclined; Kafka's last literary activity consisted in reading the proofs of the volume, *A Hunger Artist: Four Stories.* It "handed down to posterity" the story that gave the book its title (it had appeared for the first time in October 1922 in S. Fischer's literary magazine, *Die Neue Rundschau*) as well as "First Sorrow," "A Little Woman," and "Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk." One of these, "First Sorrow," was written before "A Hunger Artist" and should have been burned according to the penciled "will"; yet it was published by Kafka himself shortly before his death.

It is clear that Max Brod had good reasons—or at least good doubts—when he decided not to obey either of the two "wills." Some of these reasons and doubts he stated in that postscript to *The Trial.* Yet there were more and even stronger

Erich Heller, Avalon Professor in Humanities at Northwestern University, is the author of *The Disinherited Mind* and *The Artist's Journey into the Interior.* The present essay will appear in a slightly different form as the introduction to Franz Kafka's *Letters to Felice,* to be published by Schocken Books in September.

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ones which he either overlooked or suppressed. In a letter of June 26, 1922, written approximately at the time of the second (penciled) "will," Kafka explained to his friend the extremely ambivalent nature of his "self-condemnation" for which Brod had obviously reproached him. This negative attitude toward himself and all his works had, Kafka wrote, two aspects: on the one hand, it expressed what he "really" thought of his products, and therefore it was "the truth"; and insofar as it was the truth, he would be only too happy to snatch "the repulsive little tale" ("First Sorrow") he had just sent to his publisher, Kurt Wolff, "from Wolff's drawer and wipe it from his memory." But on the other hand, he wrote, there was "method" in those condemnatory epistles that so frequently accompanied his stories on their way to the publisher. For while they expressed his true estimate of his work, they were also calculated to make it impossible for the publisher to write back: You are quite right; your stuff is no good; I am returning it to you. And it is "by virtue of the method" that the publisher is so radically disarmed. For if he now praises what Kafka has submitted, he is not doing so merely for the sake of conventional courtesy; rather, he has been "methodically" led truly to believe that there is evidence of genius where the unjustly dejected author sees nothing but failure. And Kafka concludes his letter to Brod by exclaiming, "What investigations!"

Indeed, what investigations! Investigations such as Kafka, in subsequent letters, refers to as his "*Winkelzüge*," his shifts and crooked moves. What Kafka's true "will" was—whether its words were valid in their literalness or in their "methodical" intent—would have been hard to decide for anyone entrusted with carrying out his ruinous order, let alone for his closest friend whose spiritual life was determined in no small measure by the fondest admiration of the other's works, and who had, moreover, warned him that he would not act as such an executor. Is Kafka's instruction not a little reminiscent of the "stratagem" of the heroine of his last story, the singing mouse Josephine, who, although she knew only one desire, namely, to win the "public, unambiguous, permanent recognition of her art," perversely refused one day to sing any more—in order to reach her goal? Indeed she disappeared altogether so that people should search for her and fiercely entreat her to give concerts again: "what Josephine really wants is not what she puts into words." On July 10, 1914—one day before that journey to Berlin which ended with the dissolution of his first engagement to Felice—Kafka wrote to his sister Ottla who, familiar with the difficulties of that relationship, presumably had asked him what he intended to achieve by his visit: "I write not as I speak, I speak not as I think, I think not as I ought to think, and so it goes on into the deepest darkness."

WHAT then is Kafka's "true will" with regard to his works? In one of his last letters to Felice (October 1, 1917), he speaks of two beings who fight each other within himself; or rather, he says that he *is* their fight and will perish in their struggle. And although in counting the number of pugnacious souls in his breast he makes, as it were, a mistake in his favor (for that fight is among many warriors, and every one of them fights every other), it is indeed always a duel that, on any particular occasion, is being fought, with the duelists assuming the notorious German roles of Faust and Mephistopheles even if they speak with the more fatigued voices of a later epoch. The one asks, after the manner of Goethe's Mephistopheles, whether there was anything worth reading to be found in those works? Was the "eternal void" not preferable? Yet the other, despite his dejection, faintly hopes that on account of his works a trace at least of his days on earth may survive throughout the eons. Whereupon the first again tempts him with the question: And what would be the use of that? Or, as the German-speaking Jews of Prague, Kafka's fellow citizens and inhabitants of the Café Arco, used to say: *"Und wenn schon!"* (So what?). Kafka himself could not but resist the temptation of such indifference. Indeed, again and again he stared with a kind of passsionate melancholy into the voids of the human spirit; and yet his craving for the spiritual consummation of the time given to him was equally impassioned. Therefore he was at no moment of his life and art capable of such skepticism (between "life" and "art" there senselessly officiates here an "and" which, compelled by the rules of language, conjoins what are, for Kafka, one and the same and are yet in irreconcilable opposition). Kafka, ever anew, saw himself faced with incompatible possibilities: the fame of the artist, for instance, or the saving grace of oblivion; marriage or the ascetic life. Hence he often wavered with such vehemence and intensity that from a distance his oscillations looked like firmness. In such paradoxes lie the roots of Kafka's extraordinary genius, a genius that prompted Max Brod, its first discoverer, to act not in accordance with the text of his "will." Of his "will" or his will? But Kafka's will had no text, and his text no will.

Hamlet, before him, suffered the same calamity. Hamlet's self-condemnations come from the same origin as Kafka's; namely, from the discovery that his soul is subject to laws radically different from those that rule the incomprehensible "givenness" of the external life. How could Fortinbras, Kafka asks in his diary in September 1915, say that Hamlet had conducted himself truly like a king? Royal conduct where authentic existence has become impossible? For the authenticity of life rests upon the natural correspondence between the inner soul and disposition

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of a man and the external world in which he exists. Where this is lacking, authenticity becomes a chimera, and wavering the only genuine action. It is the ethically most delicate persons who tend to blame themselves for this imbalance between mind and circumstance, this estrangement of the soul from the world, and indict themselves for using actors' tricks, indeed deceit, when in truth every outward sign or gesture—be it the rejection of the parental home, or the abandonment of a senseless profession, or marrying, or at times even the writing of words—is bound to strike them as a coarsely false designation of the inner state. Before Kafka wrote to Felice on October 1, 1917, describing his disease as only apparently tuberculosis but, within, a weapon wielded by himself against himself (and this, he says, is the reason why there cannot be any cure for him), she must have asked him whether he had always been truthful toward her. With the moral hypochondria of a man ready to *feel* guiltily responsible for what he *knows* to be a flaw in the order of the world, he answers that he has lied very little, assuming that his life can be lived at all with "very few lies": "I am a mendacious creature; for me it is the only way to maintain an even keel, my boat is fragile." The balance that it is impossible to keep without lying is surely that between the inner and the outer conditions, and the instability of the boat is due to the fact that it has been made according to a design that condemns it to shipwreck in the element in which it has been forced to move by a dispensation as mysterious as it seems malicious. But this confession, false in its outward simplicity, is followed by the typically Kafkaesque complication that comes closer to the truth. Yes, Kafka writes, he does want to deceive, but "without actual deception."

Just as Hamlet's "acting" is nothing but a theatrically effective code in a situation that compels the inner man to be someone else as soon as he becomes active in the external sphere, so Kafka's "deceiving without deception" is merely the honest but futile toll paid by language at the broken bridge over the gulf fixed between within and without. "Deceiving without deception"—it is a milder version of the phrase with which he characterized himself when in his diary (July 23, 1914) he described the family scene in Berlin at the dissolution of the first engagement: "Devilish in my innocence," or of that with which the father in "The Judgment" accuses his son: "An innocent child, yes, that you were truly, but still more truly have you been a devilish human being."

THIS is the question that the letters ask with terrible urgency: What was the nature of the relationship between Kafka and the things that, according to a universal convention he himself accepted with a self-tormenting and quasi-religious resolution, make up the world's external reality? Was his inner life, and thus also his will, related to that world in a "natural" manner? That is, in a manner expressible, if at all, not alone through his art—and even through his art only obscurely; for his is an art more poignantly and disturbingly obscure than literature has ever known. Does it, therefore, make sense at all to speak of the carrying-out or not-carrying-out of his will, if this will is perhaps untranslatable into anything that can "really" be willed or done? Suppose Felice, long after these two futile wedding preparations in two cities, long after the termination of the engagement, perhaps long after Kafka's death, had gathered the courage to read these letters again, and then asked herself: Was it really "I" whom he thought he loved? Would she not have discovered that "she" had no real existence on these sheets of paper? Indeed, as the end of their liaison approached, he knew, and remarked in his diary of September 21, 1917, that she, the "real" Felice, bore an excessive burden of unhappiness; while he, the artist and conjurer of the unreal, said of himself—perhaps unconsciously following the model of Goethe's Tasso—that, where others would be silenced by their pain, he, in his suffering, with his "head still smarting from unhappiness," was yet able to "go beyond that and with as many flourishes as I have the talent for . . . ring simple, or contrapuntal, or a whole orchestration of changes on my theme" (diary, September 19, 1917). Must she not have felt most terribly betrayed, although he had never deceived her intentionally, and even if she recognized that nothing ever had raised her so high as did the incandescent language of his letters?

As deeply problematical as Kafka's love was his attitude toward his writing. And this is why the "true" executor of his will would have had to be a magician, the producer of a sequence of mythical scenes where his works, after they had been burned, would rise again from the ashes, purified, in unheard-of beauty and perfection, consisting of nothing but "sheer light, sheer freedom, sheer power, no shadow, no barrier." Thus Schiller once described his highest poetic aspiration; and Kafka, after completing "A Country Doctor" in September 1917, confided to his diary that writing such stories could still give him "passing satisfaction," but happiness he would know only if he succeeded in "raising the world into the pure, the true, and the immutable." Often it seems that Kafka had no will except this; and this one aspired to a world in which no "last wills" had to be made, because it was that "spiritual world" which, he once said, alone had true existence: "What we call the world of the senses is the evil in the spiritual world"; and the never-satisfied claim he made upon art, his art, was that it should cleanse the only true world, the spiritual one, of the evil in it—by means of the

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absolute perfection of its language. Certainly, language is the most common possession of all men: all people speak, just as in the nation of mice everyone whistles, but only in the whistling of Kafka's artist, the singing mouse Josephine, is it "free from the fetters of daily life and it sets us free too for a little while."

Flaubert meant so much to Kafka that he could have said of him what he once wrote to Felice of Strindberg (October 26, 1916): "One has only to close one's eyes and one's own blood delivers lectures" about him. And it was Flaubert who once dreamed of "writing a book about nothing at all, a book that would have not the slightest bearing upon the external world and would be held together entirely by the inner force of its style." This ambition, which in the case of Flaubert aimed at absolute aestheticism, with Kafka took off its aesthetic mask and clearly showed its religious features: Kafka once called his writing a form of prayer; and whenever he tried to convince Felice that he must not marry, he almost always spoke of his literary vocation as if its fulfillment depended upon his keeping a monk's vow of celibacy. His notebook contains this entry: "The world—F. is its representative—and my ego are tearing my body apart in a conflict that there is no resolving."

Only if his writing goes well has he the strength to live; this he tells her again and again, and as early as November 1, 1912, he confesses that, had he met her "during a barren period," he would never have been courageous enough to approach her. But if there is, for once, such rare abundance of productive energy, he must not waste it upon "living." For when he is deserted by his art, he feels forsaken by God and cannot live up to the demands of any human relationship.

If ever there was a truly vicious circle, this is it. Even in the initial stages of their correspondence she, with the instinct of a woman threatened by a powerful rival, had obviously counseled him to be more moderate in his literary dedication. No, he replies on November 5, 1912, he would be a "hopeless fool" if he did what she requests: "If I spare myself in this respect, I am not really sparing myself, I am committing suicide"; it is quite possible that his writing is "worthless"; but if so, then he too is "definitely and without doubt worthless." And although his anxieties at the prospect of marriage seem sometimes prompted by the fear of sexual impotence, they are also, and probably much more so, due to his misgivings about a manner of living that might be the betrayal of his inmost truth.

And was human sexuality not more than anything else cursed with that curse that had upset the congruity between within and without? Was it not unavoidable that for him the unequivocal directness of the act of love should persistently be brought into question by inner voices denying that it was true to the complex inner state? One of these voices makes itself heard in a diary note of July 5, 1916: "The hardships of living together. Forced upon us by strangeness, pity, lust, cowardice, vanity, and only deep down, perhaps, a thin little stream worthy of the name of love, impossible to seek out, flashing once in the moment of a moment." This was written during the few summer days of 1916 that he spent in Marienbad with Felice who then, most likely for the first time, was his mistress. Years afterward, those days shine in his memory with the light of a perplexed happiness; and yet even then they are recalled not without doubt and a little terror. At the end of January 1922, he was in the Bohemian resort of Spindlermühle. What would it be like, he asks in his diary, if Milena—the woman whose love then dominated his life—joined him there? Of course, it would give him some pleasure; and yet it would be terrible: "I should be plunged into a world in which I could not live." And then: "It only remains to solve the riddle of why I had fourteen days of happiness in Marienbad." Whatever may be the solution to this riddle, one answer may well be that he was not all that happy, or at least that his happiness did not last two weeks. In any case, whatever he may have felt six years ago, now, he says, it is too late. Let others be in love and make love; for himself, this is now unthinkable: "I am too far away, am banished." True, he has a few representatives in the regions "down there," but his main sustenance grows "from other roots in other climes."

Was it, then, his writing that came from those roots or breathed that air? Sometimes he seemed to believe this. During such periods his "true life" consisted in defending his writing desk, and happiness was in writing well. Melancholy threatened when he wrote badly, disaster when he reached a dead point. Then his laments sounded as if they were for a lost love; but he was referring to his stories when he spoke of their "withdrawing" from him, "rejecting" him, or "denying themselves" to him. If for some time he was unable to write, he was "in a void." On June 26, 1913, he wrote Felice that only in the depth of writing resided his center of gravity, and he apparently had no notion how much she must have been hurt by his telling her at the same time that she had this much in common with his job (and she knew of course that he detested it), that she too was "on the surface of life." Thus a marriage with her would be compatible with the office but not with his existence as a writer.

Was his "true" life rooted in literature? It would be unduly simple to put it like this. An amateur graphologist, whom Felice had met during a vacation, had "analyzed" Kafka's character for her from his handwriting. She sent him the result. "The man

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in your pension should leave graphology alone," Kafka replied on August 14, 1913. For his findings were all wrong: neither is he, Kafka, "very determined" in his actions nor "extremely sensual"; on the contrary, he has a "magnificent inborn capacity for asceticism." And so on, and nothing whatever in that person's findings is correct. But the most absurdly false thing to say of him is that he is interested in literature. There is no grain of truth in this, Kafka protests: "I have no literary interests, but am made of literature, I am nothing else, and cannot be anything else." And then he goes on to tell her a little episode from a history of Satanism he was just reading: A monk had the gift of singing so beautifully that everybody who heard him listened with sheer delight. But one day another cleric believed he recognized the voice of Satan in that loveliness and proceeded to exorcise him; and the singer whose life resided entirely in his gift of song dropped dead and his body began at once to decay. "The relationship," Kafka comments, "between me and literature is similar . . . except that my literature is not as sweet as that monk's voice." This means, as he warns Felice again on August 22, 1913, that as his wife she would have to lead "a monastic life at the side of a man who is peevish, miserable, silent, discontented, and sickly," who "is chained to invisible literature by invisible chains." And two days later he affirms once more that he has no "bent for writing," as she must have called it in a letter to him; no, certainly not, he answers, this is no "bent": "A bent can be uprooted and crushed. But this is what I am." It follows that what he expected of the executor of his will was aid in a kind of posthumous suicide.

He is nothing but literature, he says; and he says it so often, with such determination, and in such excellent prose as could never be written by one who did not believe what he said. Yet not less frequently, and with equal determination, and surely not in worse prose, he says still more: that for this reason he has forfeited his chances of salvation. No doubt it seemed to him that his "true life" consisted in writing, that his whole existence had its "center of gravity" in the depth of literary creation, that through art alone he might raise the world into "the pure, the true, and the immutable," and that marriage or profession, indeed the whole world as perceived through the senses, was nothing but the evil in the only "real"—the spiritual—world, a world that art, and only art, could make accessible to the senses without itself falling prey to evil. But it merely seemed so. "In reality" it was precisely at this point that the devil lay in wait for his chosen victim: for him who deluded himself with such superstitions. Kafka's faith in the high spiritual rank of his art was indeed an intermittent one; more often he believed that art was his curse.

In a long letter that Kafka wrote to Max Brod at the beginning of July 1922, the condemnation of his art—and, it would seem, not only of his—reaches its climax. "Writing sustains me," Kafka says in that letter, as he said so often to Felice. But what sort of life is it that is thus sustained? An extremely questionable one: "Writing is a delicious reward. But for what? During the last night the answer was as clear to me as a lesson meant for little children: reward for services rendered to the devil." And this is followed by Kafka's description, as grand as it is precise, of what he sees as devilish in writing: "This descent to dark powers, this unbinding of spiritual forces whose nature it is to be bound together, these dubious embraces and what else may go on down there that is forgotten when one writes one's stories in the light of the sun. Perhaps there is also another kind of writing. I know only this."

IN THE letters to Felice, Kafka never tires of indicting, with apparently inexhaustible resourcefulness, the pursuit of literature as a form of living. For him, this manner of existence is "devilish" because of the insatiable sense of aesthetic enterprise with which the artist builds imaginary houses and palaces in order to look at them admiringly and offer them to the admiring inspection of other men, while as a "human being" he is without a home. "It is," Kafka writes in that letter to Brod, the artist's "vanity and love of pleasure that perpetually gyrate around and delight in himself, or even someone else—in which case the movement multiplies and becomes a solar system of vanities"; it is, furthermore, the "unreality" of poetic existence that, more "mortal" than any other mortal life, "cannot last," is "not even made of dust" but is "a mere construction of the chase after pleasure." What others know as the self is, in the case of the poet, debarred from eternal life because it has lived not even once. "I have remained clay," Kafka writes, "I have not used the spark for making fire but merely for illuminating my deadness." At the beginning of August 1914—perhaps because Europe behaved at that time as if she insisted upon becoming more "real" every day—he notes in his diary with the utmost clarity the consumptive manner of his experiencing the real: "My talent for portraying my dreamlike inner life has thrust all other matters into the background."

He demanded of Felice that she should write to him more and more often in order to assure him of his own self and their love in the only form truly appropriate to him (if he was not in the mood to implore her to write less because the arrival of a letter made him incapable of dealing with the business of the day). And once, when she had obviously apologized for not having written a letter he expected, he replied (during the night of February 21-22, 1913): "Neither in the

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office nor in the tram could you write to me. Shall I tell you why, dearest? You didn't know whom to write to. I am no target for letters." For he did not really exist; he only existed, he thought, in the "unreality" of literature.

This is the curse: He is nothing when he cannot write; and he is in a different kind of nothingness if, rarely enough, he believes he has written well. As early as the first weeks of their correspondence, he tells Felice (November 1, 1912) that, whenever he is unsuccessful in his attempts to write, he lies collapsed on the floor, "fit for the dustbin." This is clearly an allusion to that "exceptionally repulsive story" (as he calls "The Metamorphosis" in the letter of November 24, 1912) in which at the end the charwoman applies the broom to the insect corpse of Gregor Samsa, and afterward laughingly announces to his parents and sister that they need not worry any more about "how to get rid of the thing next door." And on November 29-30, Kafka, writing during a night that has been sleepless with frustration, promises Felice that in future he will behave more like an affectionate fiancé, for "surely I can't be utterly thrown out of my writing after having thought more than once that I was sitting in its center, settled in its comforting warmth."

Small wonder, then, that, not so long after this sorrowful love letter (addressed, it would seem, more to his art than to Felice), during the night of January 14-15, 1913, when apparently his work is going well, he confides what surely must remain incomprehensible to her: that he will be a faithless husband because night after night he will commit adultery with his writing. Innocently and cluelessly, she had obviously told him that she would sit up with him while he was writing. No, he replies, that would make writing quite impossible for him because even the loneliest night was not night enough to give him the stillness and solitude he needs for it. For writing demands surrender without the slightest restraint, a degree of sincerity and honesty from which a man, "as long as he is in his right mind," must refrain in his dealings with other people, be it the most beloved person. For the ground on which he stands—or even two human beings stand together—begins to shake as soon as that "truer emotion" wells up in him which alone can give valid form to the work: "I have often thought that the best mode of life for me would be to sit in the innermost room of a spacious locked cellar with my writing things and a lamp. . . . And how I would write! From what depths I would drag it up! Without effort! For extreme concentration knows no effort. The trouble is that I might not be able to keep it up for long, and at the first failure—which perhaps even in these circumstances could not be avoided—would be bound to end in a grandiose fit of madness."

Only when Kafka dwells in his writing does he dwell in his truth. This truth is not to be found anywhere else. For it is such that he who has lived with it must become insane if he is deprived of it; and life itself, the world in which, for instance, marriages are made, *is* this deprivation. Would she please tell her "cellar-dweller" what she will think of that, after she has become his beloved and deceived wife? Not much, would undoubtedly be her answer. But he saves her the trouble of it. Half a year later, in his letter of August 22, 1913, he says it himself: If the truth of what he writes is to be measured in terms of the "real" (and here truth changes sides again and emerges now as the ally of "reality"), the result of such an assessment would be, he says, an unfathomable disproportion, a disproportion to which much later, in a letter to Max Brod (July 22, 1922), he gives a simple and exact name: lie. At that time he had just read the memoirs of the German writer and poet, Theodor Storm, and quoted the conversation Storm and the poet Eduard Mörike once had about Heinrich Heine, whom they both admired. Mörike said in his homely Swabian dialect: "He is a poet through and through, but not for a quarter of an hour could I live with him: because of the lie right in the middle of his being." And Kafka comments: "And this is, at least seen from one angle, a brilliant summing-up of what I think of the writer"—of *any* writer.

Once again literature, which only a little while ago had been the purest servant of truth, shaking to their foundations all illusory "realities," is itself the purest lie. And why? Because it demands of him who practices it, indeed who *is* literature, the abandonment of the real world. Thus it is not surprising that again and again Kafka is tempted to side with the world against himself. And how well the world sometimes fared in his care! Immeasurably better than it deserved! The writer who like no other had anticipated in his imagination the horrors of an epoch that began with World War I accepted, as again these letters show, the war itself in the matter-of-fact manner of the many who easily become reconciled to whatever it is that happens. Moreover, he saw the war as his chance to escape into a real battle from the agony of the unreal one that went on in his brain and heart. On August 27, 1916, he noted in his diary: "There is no question of your first task: to become a soldier." He made several efforts in this direction, even if, very probably, in the way in which he had made many other efforts—in the sure expectation of failure. Before the war, he never questioned the crisis-ridden and fragile reality of the late Hapsburg monarchy. In this respect he was not different from any other loyal subject of the Emperor. Indeed, he was in the apocalyptic mood "to advocate retreat . . . for everything" (to Felice, October 27, 1912) because on the Balkan Peninsula

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the political situation had become more and more menacing to Austria. True, he detested the noisy processions of patriotic crowds hailing the Austrian declaration of war; these, he wrote in his diary, belonged to the most repugnant occurrences accompanying the war; and he turned—almost in the manner of the Jewish Viennese satirist Karl Kraus—anti-Semitic by blaming them on the Jewish merchants "who are German one day, Czech the next." Yet he blamed himself and not the event for whatever was negative in his feelings about the war. He was, he said, an "empty vessel" that was yet "full of lies, hate, and envy"; he discovered nothing but wickedness in his heart: "pettiness, indecision, envy, and hatred against those who are fighting." Later, on April 5, 1915, when Felice had obviously asked him whether the war made him suffer, he answered that, if he suffered, then it was mostly because "I myself am taking no part." One month later, on May 6, 1915, he wrote that he would be happy to become a soldier. Very soon he was to have his medical examination, and Felice should wish, as much as he did himself, that they would accept him.

If one seriously believes that Kafka is very important for our understanding of the age in which he lived and wrote, then, for a while at least, one ought to turn a deaf ear to the din of analyses which locate the causes of our wars and other troubles exclusively in colonialism, class struggles, and the dialectics of history, and ought to listen instead to the still voice with which a man, despairing of himself, opts for a world that, spiritually forsaken as it is, cannot but destroy itself.

On September 20, 1912, Kafka wrote his first letter to Felice whom, whether he knew it or not, he had sought out as his refuge from the onrush of his "unreality." Three months later, on New Year's Eve, he already had a distinct premonition of the final futility of his attempt to escape, and wrote her the astonishing letter which is, from beginning to end, literature, true literature. In this letter he demands her answer to a question which, when it comes to it, is no question at all but a description of himself in his exceedingly problematical relationship to her and to the world (even the wording of the "question" is reminiscent of his aphorism, "You are the task. No pupil far and wide"): he has, he says, put his question—would she put up with his fits of "unreality" or rather run away?—in "more than plain" form because he wants her answer too to be overprecise and given "independent from every point of view, even from that of reality" (overprecise to the point of the unreal—what an admirable characterization of his own work!). And he concludes his letter with the wish to draw her "closer, closer, closer" to himself; but at this point he appears to have been overcome by the suspicion that he desires the impossible because she and he live in different worlds, he in his own—as he thought—non-world, and she —well, she in Berlin. "Where are you at this moment?" he asks, "From whose company am I drawing you away?" On the surface, to be sure, he meant only some Berlin New Year's party, but as he roused himself from the immersion in his letter, he may well have known how menacingly much he said—not "from *whose* company," but possibly out of human society as such.

Overprecise to the point of the unreal: this is certainly true of the letter of November 12, 1912, in which, three and a half months after the occurrence, he describes to her the evening of August 13, when he met her for the first time. Testimony to love at first sight? To an eye immensely sharpened by that love? To a memory enhanced in its exactitude by the incipient passion? Possibly so; yet at the same time it is a document of that literary realism which has invited the epithet "magic," one of those documents that, through their hectic meticulousness, reveal the anxiety of an imagination more and more enclosed within itself and therefore fearing that it might in the end lose the real altogether if it does not intensely watch over its every detail. In such a hypnotically realistic description there is no trace to be found of that composure of mind with which Homer describes the shield of Achilles, knowing well that he can safely rely upon the solid reality of the shield as much as upon the appropriateness of his language to that reality. With Kafka there is, instead of such equanimity, the nervous desire to obtain from words the guarantee that "the real" has still some validity for the inner sense, that it still "counts."

An "empty face that wore its emptiness openly"—this is how Kafka's diary describes Felice after their first meeting. Empty: thus it offers as much room as an empty page to the expansive imagination. And indeed, this imagination instantly falls in love, and before long word-storms, let loose in Prague, will blow around the beloved empty face in Berlin. It begins on September 20, 1912, five weeks after their first and, for the time being, only brief meeting in the midst of other people, and begins with "My dear Fräulein Bauer." This letter, rather significantly, happens to coincide with the onrush of that sustained *literary* inspiration which, among other writings, produced "The Judgment," written two days later in the eight hours of one night, the story in which F.B., to whom it is dedicated, lends her initials to the equally "empty" figure of Frieda Brandenfeld, just as she will lend them later to Fräulein Bürstner in *The Trial* and, in the shortened form F., to Frieda—Frieda again!—in *The Castle*. And what began with "My dear Fräulein Bauer" rises, driven on by the imagination and the written word, to "Dear Fräulein Felice," and "Dearest

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Fräulein Felice," and ultimately to the ecstatic "*Du*" of November 14, 1912, erupting in the letter that addresses her as "Dearest." Yet this embrace by the imagination and on paper is certainly no token of an early rendezvous. When Felice suggests a Christmas meeting in the "external reality" of Berlin, Kafka refuses, saying that he must use the few free days for his writing. This he does; but what he writes is, above all, letters to her.

This is the onset of those years filled with the agonies of the struggle—not the struggle for this woman whom he could have taken as his wife at any time he chose if he truly wanted a home in this world, but the struggle for the reality of world, marriage, and home. It is moving and at the same time terrifying to watch his words—how, in their entrancing dexterity and calculated helplessness, they woo this "reality" of hers, those fragments of reality he gathers in through this correspondence, and how they maintain the precarious state of balance between the real and the literary. And all the time they are on the verge of becoming literature themselves, indulging in mythologizing, now abysmally sad and now again comical. In an instant Kafka can transform the real pain with which he awaits, often in vain, Felice's letters into the occasion for writing an enchanting comedy scene, in which his office staff, Mergl, Wottawa, and Böhm, appear as three comic *postillons d'amour*, all trained to bring him with the utmost haste the letters arriving from Berlin. Or, having urged Felice time and again to describe her every day in minute particularity, he endows this or that triviality she reports with the quality of a mythic moment: the nocturnal signal, for instance, with which she announces to her mother that she has come home. Or he implores her to send him photographs, and more and more photographs, this paper currency of real moments ever more devalued by every passing hour; and as soon as he holds them in his hands, he loses himself in the intense contemplation of those shadow appearances which, like the face in its outer emptiness, allow the inner gaze to descend into the depths of the imagination and at the same time maintain the illusion that its attention is fixed upon the reality of what is so realistically depicted. And he studies these mechanical reproductions as if they were all veiled images of a goddess, vaguely promising that one day she might reveal herself and, with herself, the mystery of the meaning of the world. Or the subject of the correspondence is the reality, menacingly approaching, of the marriage quarters and the question of how to furnish them; and momentarily the sumptuous stuff she purchases turns into a brood of dragons obstructing the knight's progress toward his beloved. Everything he does comes to the same; it perfectly succeeds as literature, and perfectly fails in coming to grips with the real situation.

ONLY ONCE do these letters fill themselves with more reality: after their stay in Marienbad during the summer of 1916. At that time a Jewish People's Home was founded in Berlin; Felice helped there in looking after refugees, particularly children, from Eastern Europe, and Kafka immersed himself in her pedagogical problems, encouraged and counseled her, recommended reading matter for her or her pupils, sent her parcels of books, and attended with sagacity and common sense to the real. The first contact—indeed, through her activity, not his—with a real, even a social and national, effort that struck him as good and sensible calmed his mind for a while, although he told her in his letter of September 12, 1916, that on examination it would become clear that he was not a Zionist. This was probably due to his suspicion that the "normalization" of the Jews in a national state would endanger exactly that which he regarded as the most valuable Jewish quality, found above all among East European Jews: a particular kind of religiousness and spirituality, something that was "unreal," but unreal in a—for once—positive sense. Be that as it may, the time in which it seemed that he and Felice might found their life together upon something real was very brief. His anxieties returned and were, if anything, more intense than before. Despite this, there was the second engagement. Yet soon afterward Kafka suffered the hemorrhage, symptom of the disease from which, as he knew, he would never recover. For the blood did not simply come from the sick lung, but from the wound that one of the two enemies fighting within him had inflicted upon the other.

One of the two enemies. Which one? No doubt the real one, for Kafka really died of this wound. It would nonetheless be rash to say that reality proved stronger in the end than literature—or that to which, following Kafka's usage, we have given the modest name of literature. For the truth is that literature for him was not just literature; despite the devilish suspicions he indefatigably uttered against it, it remained the only means by which he tried to give perfect form and shape to a life that, after all, did not quite reject the demand for meaning, or at least allowed meaning faintly to shine from the depth through layers and layers of the meaningless that had all but covered it up. Indeed, Kafka is not altogether wrong in saying to Felice that he is nothing but literature—real literature. For almost everything he wrote possesses the indisputable reality and "being" that are rare in modern writing and transcend most realities of the age. In this sense too these letters are, like himself, literature. There is about them nothing that is mere whim or caprice—nothing of the kind of privacy that makes the publication of many an intimate correspondence painful and forbidden. And they have this in common with the songs

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of the medieval poets of courtly prose, the minnesingers: that she to whom they are addressed is not "really" being courted.

IN THIS century it is certainly too much to expect that these letters will inspire some readers to study the poetry of the minnesingers rather than to recite Freudian theorems, long since learned by heart. Indeed, it is to be feared that, for instance, Kafka Senior, to whom Franz himself is likely to have done some injustice, will lose his once overpowering personality altogether, assuming instead the role of a theoretical superego or turning into a kind of Old Prague ghost of King Laius, father of Oedipus, as soon as it becomes known that his son wrote to Felice (on August 30, 1913) that it was not "facts" that prevented him from making her and himself happy, but "an insurmountable fear, fear of achieving happiness, a desire and a command to torment myself for some higher purpose." And people will cry "impotence" upon reading, in the letter of July 10, 1913, that the obstacle to their marriage was his "dread of the union even with the most beloved woman." They will know much better than the writer himself what was the cause of this "unappeasable apprehension"; for he himself accepted this anxiety as if it were "a command from heaven."

A command from heaven; to feel this in a world that serves its citizens with very different, and apparently more dependable, information about the discomfort of their souls—might this not justify a little the misfortune of this love? Even, perhaps, justify the misery that Kafka must have caused Felice? Had he been born in Provence, not in Prague, and not toward the end of the 19th but in, say, the 11th century, he might have become one of the first poets who spoke and sang of a love, a *minne*, that desired no consummation but meant the faithful hope of transcendent yet not unreal bliss.

Love letters? On February 12, 1922, Kafka entered in his diary that he had never known in himself the words "I love you," but only "the expectant stillness that should have been broken by my 'I love you,' that is all I have known, nothing more." It is the languid minnesong of a poet to whom, because there is no God, even love denies itself—or whose love is so irresistibly drawn into the empty upper spheres that it misses its earthly assignation with the beloved, just as Kafka, in the astonishingly precise fantasies he records in his New Year 1912-13 letter, misses his appointment with Felice.

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The Year of Europe

Walter Laqueur

THE Nixon administration has proclaimed 1973 the "year of Europe," but the proclamation may be considered a bit rash. Despite President Nixon's scheduled visit to the continent later this year for a series of economic and political discussions, there are no grounds for expecting any real alleviation of the deep and abiding strains in U.S.-European relations, either this year or in the foreseeable future. The main problem facing Europe is not the need for a new and more stable monetary system, or for more realistic trade agreements with the United States; economic issues of this kind are intricate but they are not intractable. The real problem is the double European crisis: on the one hand an overall inability to make further advances on the road to political and military integration, and on the other a series of domestic traumas besetting individual European nations.

Below the surface of relative prosperity, Europe suffers from a paralysis of will which is all the more dangerous because it is progressing slowly. While a sudden catastrophe can sometimes release hidden resources of strength that can enable a people to cope with and eventually to overcome emergency, creeping afflictions of the kind now troubling Europe sap the will and make recovery difficult. In the perspective of the next few years—and few politicians look beyond this span—there is no reason to expect a major breakdown in Europe. Yet if the present state of affairs should continue, the road to recuperation may become hopelessly blocked. The European malaise will then come increasingly to preoccupy the mind of America—not for a year, but for a decade and more.

I

DURING the last twelve months England, Denmark, and Ireland have joined the Common Market; "ministers for Europe" have been appointed in West Germany and in Britain; France has drawn a bit closer to NATO (but not very much); the nine European prime ministers have met once and the foreign ministers several times; and the Eurogroup (the association of NATO's European defense ministers) has been convened. But, on the other hand, progress toward political and defense integration has been very nearly nil, and in fact the subject is hardly discussed these days. When European leaders meet, their agenda covers topics like the dangers of overinvestment in steel, the common farm-price structure, the advantages of a uniform system of indirect taxation by value-added tax, negotiation of tariff and trade arrangements with outside countries, and so on.

The political aims of the European Community are modest. It does not wish to be a state, let alone a superstate, only to coordinate foreign policy in a number of important areas. As Ralf Dahrendorf has put it, the EEC constitutes no more than "an attempt on the part of free countries to work out some important policies together."* But even to achieve this limited purpose, an effective framework and certain instruments are needed. There have been consultations on such matters as the recognition of Bangladesh and North Vietnam and the problem of coordinating West Europe's stand in the European Security Conference. There have been various statements of intent and suggestions for "joint ventures." But since decisions have to be accepted unanimously (as in the old Polish Sejm), no visible movement has taken place. In the world of politics as in the world of economics, of course, certain necessities exist which, as Jean Monnet said, are great "federators." Some observers believe that relations with the United States, probably the most important matter facing EEC at present, may turn out to fulfill that role for Europe. This, however, is doubtful.

The economic issues at stake are well known and need not be rehearsed in detail. Americans complain about European neo-mercantilism—the growing tariff walls of the Common Market, and in particular the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which has caused a 40-per-cent drop in U.S. exports to Europe of CAP-protected items. As a result of preferences extended to Mediterranean and African countries, further damage has

WALTER LAQUEUR is director of the Institute of Contemporary History in London. Mr. Laqueur's works include *Out of the Ruins of Europe, The Rebirth of Europe,* and *A History of Zionism.*

* "The Foreign Policy of EEC," in *The World Today,* January 1973.

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been caused to the American balance of payments. Americans demand the elimination of European import quotas and the reduction of tariffs. Since August 1971, in fact, pressure has been exerted on Europe to make trade concessions and to give up its restrictive practices. Some American economists believe that the abolition of CAP could mean an increase of American agricultural exports from the present record level of $10 billion to twice that sum in 1980.

According to European statistics, however, a different picture emerges: EEC had a deficit of $23 billion in its trade with the United States from 1958 to 1971, and only in 1972 did European exports to the U.S. for the first time exceed imports (by $1.4 billion). Even though the export of certain American agricultural crops fell, overall agricultural exports rose by over 40 per cent from 1964 to 1971. America does have a trade deficit of some $6 billion, but most of it is with Japan (4.1 billion) and Canada (2.5 billion). Europeans argue that the American deficit was caused by movements of investment and other capital by multinational companies (most of them American). In view of these changes in world trade (the European argument continues) it does not really matter any longer whether and to what extent individual countries liberalize their trade. Everything depends on how the multinationals (whose sales by now amount to $500 billion or more) conduct their business. If the large American companies continue to export capital to Europe on the present scale, nothing the Europeans can do will be sufficient to reduce the American deficit. Few Europeans believe that joint floating of currency will provide the answer in the long run.

On both sides of the Atlantic, everyone agrees that neo-mercantilism is bad and that a major retreat from the postwar liberalization of trade would in the end harm all concerned. Moreover, most experts believe that the present monetary system is inadequate and that a new institutional framework is needed. But it is a far cry from the recognition of these basic facts to concurrence on the steps to be taken to remedy the situation. The U.S. has been increasingly unwilling to make sacrifices on behalf of a European customs union which shows no appreciable willingness to transform itself into a political and defense unit that would allow America to reduce its military commitments, as was originally envisaged. Is it not proper that Europeans be asked to cover the deficit accruing to the U.S. balance of payments from the presence of American troops in Europe? On the other hand, there seems less justice in the American demand for unilateral trade concessions and in the complaint of American businessmen about the lack of equal privileges in Western Europe, especially since the discriminating measures against foreigners in America (such as non-tariff barriers) are in fact more substantial. A sober assessment of American national interest would make clear the need not for a trade war but for a move toward a more open international economy and a higher level of cooperation.

Europe as usual does not speak with one voice on these matters. The Germans are in principle the most eager proponents of a liberalization of world trade; they are less enthusiastic about the constant currency fluctuations for which Germany has been paying the great part of the price. In theory, Britain agrees with the Germans and also opposes CAP protectionism. But in view of the weakness of the pound, Britain is in fact the odd-man-out as far as common European monetary action is concerned; in addition, Britain requires protectionist measures for its own industry, which is in dire need of structural change. Italy, like Britain, fears that its weakened economy cannot compete at present. France on the other hand insists that its farmers be subsidized, as before, by the rest of Europe, and the growing dependence of the Gaullists on the farm vote makes it all the more unlikely that they will compromise on this issue. At the same time the French are now a little more confident about the ability of their industry to compete on equal terms with the rest of the world. The French believe that the present conflict between Europe and America is to a certain extent unavoidable and that it will lead to greater European independence and unity—which will also result in a greater French role in world affairs, as France is the leading power in Western Europe. Such an assumption is based on a totally unrealistic view of France's and Europe's place in the modern world, but is quite in line with the French record for more than a decade now, and even has some support in other European capitals as well.*

II

In the last resort, the conflicts of interest between Europe and America are no greater than those among the individual European countries. There is no real loyalty within EEC, and almost all European leaders pursue national interests at the expense of the community. Much of the debate on Europe's place in the world, its future relations with America, its growing political independence, has an eerie quality, reminiscent of theoretical discussions at a political-scientists' convention; any similarity with the real problems of the world is purely accidental. The Europe which constantly figures in the blueprints of the Eurocrats is one-dimensional; speculations concerning the future are based on the assumption that the major European countries are

* It is a sad thought that for the last twenty years France has been the main obstacle to European unity. If France did not exist, Europe would be less populous, it would produce less steel and grain, but it would be more united and thus stronger.

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stable and will remain so. Yet any survey of the European scene, however cursory, shows that this rosy picture of European prosperity, self-confidence, and cohesion is far from the reality of the situation.

In Britain, for example, not exactly a paragon of industrial peace, the number of working days lost during the last year is almost twice that of Italy, the country next in strike statistics. The trade unions are engaging in a free-for-all fight for wage increases irrespective of productivity; the highest paid and best organized workers naturally get the largest raises and the underpaid fall behind even further. Never in its history has Britain experienced such galloping inflation, and although in recent weeks there have been indications that some trade-union leaders have understood the necessity of an incomes policy, it is much too early to conclude that the immediate crisis will be overcome. The British public in the meantime has come to distrust both leading parties. And indeed what is one to make of a government which thought to freeze incomes without at the same time freezing rents and food prices? The Labour party, the only political alternative to the present government, has become largely dependent on the trade unions and is disunited; as so often in its history, being in opposition has brought out the worst in the party. In foreign affairs, it is true, the British government has fewer illusions than any other in Europe, but since Britain is weak its voice does not count for much. In the Labour party, the advocates of unilateral disarmament and neutralism have a field day while the experts on defense are not heard.

In France, the Popular Front earlier this year came very close, but not close enough, to ending fifteen years of Gaullist rule; as for M. Pompidou, he will no doubt regard the result of the elections as a mandate for further inaction. Nevertheless, the disintegration of Gaullism is inevitable: if in a time of prosperity the ruling party just manages to scrape by, there is no reason to suppose it will be able to weather the storms yet to come. This is the most conservative government France has known for many years, with a degree of corruption reminiscent of the worst days of the Third Republic.

In West Germany the Christian Democrats have not yet overcome their recent electoral defeat. They too have been pushed to the Right, and have lost part of their mass base. But the disarray in the ranks of the ruling Social Democrats may be their salvation. The onslaught of the *Jusos* (the Young Socialists) against the party leadership has come sooner than anticipated and is more threatening than one would have thought even a year ago. Originally a small group of intellectuals, the *Jusos* have by now created a genuine power base from below as well as at the top. Since many leading younger Social Democrats now belong to this wing, since the rank and file hardly counts, and since the opposition is fragmented, it seems only a question of time before they capture the party—unless, of course, the present leadership takes a really determined stand. What Lenin used to call a "rotten compromise" is most likely to emerge. Brandt cannot possibly come to terms with the *Jusos'* neutralist foreign policy, nor can he give in on economics. As a result, the *Jusos* will get their way in municipal affairs and with regard to university and school reform, which means that at least another generation of German students will grow up on Rosa Luxemburg and Mao, on Lenin and Stalin. Whereas some seven years ago it seemed to many, including myself, that Bonn could not possibly go the way of Weimar,* it now appears that this was not the only road to perdition for West Germany; whether the nation can survive radical polarization is uncertain to say the least.

The Italian economic miracle came to an end some four years ago; there is now rapid inflation, the number of unemployed is going up, investment is down in absolute terms. Italian economic growth in 1971 was nearly zero, 3 per cent in 1972. The conservative Andreotti government is proving unable to cope with working-class militancy, especially among the young. The bureaucracy, which ruled Italy before, during, and after Fascism, still thrives; there are now some 58,000 governmental and semi-governmental agencies (my own favorite is CIAAO, the Agency for the Touristic Development of the Italian Colonies, not one of which has existed for some thirty years). It seems likely that the Italian Socialists will return to the government, on the condition that it pursue a more left-wing course and take measures against the Neo-Fascists. A Popular Front on the French model is improbable because the Christian Democrats are stronger than the Gaullists, and the Italian Socialists weaker than their French counterparts. But if the economic and political crisis should persist and deepen, almost anything might happen: a right-wing military coup, a left-wing alliance with the Communists.

III

THE European crisis reflects, among other things, the arrival on the political scene of a new generation whose political memory reaches back no further than ten to fifteen years. This generation firmly believes that the cold war was the product of a misunderstanding, and that in this new age of détente the danger no longer exists of military attack from the East. Nor does the new generation see any danger of Soviet political pressure; Europe is too big and too powerful to be drawn into the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union, and anyway Soviet

* "Bonn Is Not Weimar," COMMENTARY, March 1967.

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leaders already have more than enough difficulties with their present satellites. To spend a great deal of money on defense thus seems wasteful to the new leadership of Europe, almost criminal.

The younger generation is on the whole much freer than its predecessors of nationalist prejudice. For these young people the nation-state has largely become meaningless; it is no longer something to fight for, let alone die for. Yet they have not developed a "European" consciousness either; the fact that they no longer think in national categories has actually made them more parochial rather than more internationalist in outlook. The young Europeans are mainly preoccupied with domestic problems, some of them to the point of extreme isolationism: thus, the anti-NATO line propagated by the German *Jusos* and the British Young Liberals. These people are still a minority but they are found in positions of command and have a considerable impact on public opinion.

Thus, on the issue of defense, the British and the West German governments are attacked at home for spending too much, while in Denmark and other small European countries a defense budget of 2 to 3 per cent is considered intolerable. The argument used is almost invariably that "our neighbors spend even less," as if British defense spending should be compared with that of Holland—and West German with that of Denmark—instead of with that of the Soviet bloc. West European defense spending is in fact much lower than East European and the gap is growing every year. Believers in the unlimited prospects of détente argue that this does not really matter, for sooner or later the Russians are bound to realize that such inordinate expenditure is weakening their economy and stirring up dissatisfaction on the home front. This may or may not turn out to be the case in the long run, but by then Europe itself may be all but defenseless. The dilemma was neatly summed up in a remark of Chancellor Willy Brandt in a recent interview:

> I have the feeling that the Soviet leaders are discussing the possibility whether during the years ahead a certain percentage of the money they are spending for armaments could be used for other purposes. If you look at the figures, of course, it seems as if they are saying the opposite of what I am saying, because the number of their military units is still increasing. . . . (The London *Times,* February 27, 1973.)

A "false consciousness" is spreading in Europe, the belief that one can safely ignore foreign affairs and defense. Whatever the reasons for this blindness, even some of the more intelligent Europeans have fallen prey to it, fantasizing a Europe "with free communications between East and West, substantial reductions of troops, foreign as well as indigenous, close contacts between the two parts and the beginnings of a common security system and *de facto* invalidation of the Brezhnev doctrine by a diminution of the Soviet Union's fear that her allies would be lured away into the opposite camp."* They expect that the creation of facilities of mass tourism in both directions, student exchanges, all-European TV programs, exchange of newspapers and books, will lead to an improvement of "contacts between people" and thus eventually to tangible political results. But the unfortunate fact is that there was more West-East tourism and student and newspaper exchange ten or fifteen years ago than there is today, and as for all-European TV, Soviet spokesmen have announced that they may demolish foreign transmitting satellites contaminating their air space. This, however, is ignored, while Soviet declarations of an intensified ideological struggle are interpreted as mere ritual, implying no practical consequence.

IV

Soviet intentions vis-à-vis Western Europe are no secret. The Russians feel that the stalemate which has prevailed since 1949 is now out of date, and since the balance of power in Europe has changed in their favor, they hope gradually to achieve a much greater say in West European affairs. To quote Malcolm Mackintosh:

> The Soviet leaders would hope that, by skillful and patient tactics over a long period, they and their successors could influence West European politics. Even in the short term an atmosphere might be fostered in which NATO found it difficult to maintain its military strength; differences within the Western alliance might be exploited, and an attempt made to inhibit the enlarged EEC from moving forward toward political integration. However remote it may seem, one should not lose sight of the kind of Europe which the present Soviet leaders would like to see: an Eastern Europe firmly under Soviet domination, its political systems and frontiers unchallenged by the West; a Western Europe divided both politically and economically, without binding military ties or defense links to the United States; each country with minimum forces deployed only on its own territory, and, hopefully, persuaded of the need to make its own bilateral deal with the Soviet Union on foreign policy issues. ("Moscow's View of the Balance of Power," in *The World Today,* March 1973.)

Is this picture too gloomy? Even leaving aside the Soviet preoccupation with China, surely no one believes that an entire continent, more populous than Russia itself, might somehow become part of the Soviet sphere of influence (let alone that a Soviet military offensive is even dimly dreamt of in Moscow). Nothing so dramatic, rad-

* Theo Sommer, *Europe and America in the 1970's,* Adelphi Paper 70, p. 16.

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ical, and sudden is likely to occur. During the next few years there will simply be an absence of progress on the road to European political and military unity, and a little more erosion of the political will. It is in thinking beyond this period that the picture gets darker, and that Mackintosh's predictions gain plausibility. In the interests of peace and better understanding, Western Europe would find that it had to refrain from commenting adversely on events inside the Soviet bloc. Western European trade would of necessity be reorientated in a certain degree to the East, and in effect Western Europe would find itself providing economic aid to the Soviet bloc. There would of course be no direct Soviet interference in the West's domestic affairs, no puppet governments or staged elections, no purges or rule by secret police—nothing so crude as that. But a superpower (unlike a small power) does have legitimate security interests, and these can be safeguarded only if power in the client states remains in the hands of politicians who stand for friendship and close collaboration. The same would apply *a fortiori* to commanders of the armed forces in the various European countries; and it would similarly be desirable if key positions in the economy were in the hands of people who wholeheartedly supported Europe's *Ostpolitik*. Lastly, some changes in the ideological climate might be expected, since the presence of "reactionary" political forces and the propagation of hostile ideas could cause undue friction between Europe and the USSR.

The Communist parties already existing in Western Europe might well play a decisive role in this process. Some of these parties are small, others are political movements of considerable influence. They may still be a minority, even in France and Italy, but as past experience has shown, the moral support of a superpower combined with a little pressure can make a great deal of difference, and would certainly be sufficient in the event to carry a minority party to power in one or two key countries.

The beginnings of a development like the one just sketched can be discerned even now—for instance in the Soviet interference in German domestic affairs. It has been suggested in Moscow, more or less politely, that certain key figures in West German radio stations should be removed because their continued presence is regarded as contrary to the spirit of détente. Similarly, the West German (and the British) defense budget has been attacked as being out of step with the present-day mood of relaxation; the fact that Soviet military expenditure is many times higher is disregarded. At Helsinki, where talks are being held on mutual force reductions, the Soviets have been required to adopt a subtler strategy. So far the Western countries have coordinated their moves, the "neutrals" have on the whole supported the West, and Rumania has usurped the stage in order to demonstrate its own relative independence. Facing a united Western front, the Russians have decided to eschew public debate (which they had previously praised as the great panacea for Europe's problems) and have engaged instead in secret, bilateral talks—mainly with Germany and France. This has caused confusion and suspicion in Western ranks. While it is by no means certain that the maneuver will succeed, the Russians have reason to be optimistic.

The Helsinki conference will probably drag on for many years, and the Soviets rightly believe that the mere fact of its taking place will work in their favor, no matter what the "issues" being discussed. The vaguer and less committal these are, the better. The Soviet Union has announced quite clearly that it has no intention of engaging in balanced ("asymmetric") force reductions: why make concessions if the Americans will anyway sooner or later withdraw their troops from Europe and unilaterally reduce defense expenditures under the pressure of domestic opinion?

Western observers have been disappointed by the "negative attitude" shown by the Russians, the "strange game" being played in Vienna and Helsinki, and they have expressed the fear that a stalemate might be reached in the negotiations. The fact is there was never any reason to assume the Russians would accept a military arrangement that might *increase* Western European security. Promises of small concessions on the Soviet Union's part will be enough to keep the flame of Western hope burning for years, while the Soviet Union in actuality concedes nothing and the West, agitated by internal pressures, concedes more and more.

V

THE European situation, then, is precarious both economically and politically, and the continent seems closer now than it has in a long time to a disintegration from which only the Soviet Union appears likely to profit. The current mood of isolationism in the United States plays into this state of affairs, and has created its own set of misconceptions and expressions of wishful thinking. Thus, Stephen S. Rosenfeld, a staff writer for the Washington *Post*, asked in a recent article what was wrong with the process of "Finlandization," of being drawn into the Soviet orbit, since "it's already where most of Europe wants to be."* Finland, Mr. Rosenfeld argued, is after all a neutral country, it is independent, its security does not depend on the presence of foreign troops, and it has more real freedom than some of the countries which fear being "Finlandized." It has international respect, prosperity, and excellent relations with all its neighbors, "it has as much security as the nuclear age permits anywhere, perhaps more." In other words, the example of Fin-

* Washington *Post*, December 1, 1972.

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land is living refutation of the Atlanticists' dire warnings about what would happen to Europe if American troops were withdrawn.

The problem of Finland deserves a moment's contemplation. In one sense the very term "Finlandization" is unfair to a people who have after all shown strong nerve, tact, great steadfastness, and admirable courage in a very difficult situation. One could think, as Raymond Aron has recently pointed out, of quite a few European nations that would have behaved much worse in similar circumstances.* It is also true that Finland has good relations with its neighbors (of which however it has only two, other than Russia, namely Sweden and Norway). But for the rest, Mr. Rosenfeld's pastorale has little to do with the realities of East European life. Finland is not a neutral country, as its mutual-assistance treaty with the Soviet Union states explicitly; and it is not an independent country, since the Soviet Union has the right of veto over both its foreign and its domestic policy. Time and again the Soviets have interfered in Finnish politics, deposing democratically elected governments (such as the second Fagerholm cabinet), removing heads of parties, barring candidates for key positions. The Soviet veto extends to Finland's trade and foreign relations. Books or films critical of the Soviet Union do not pass Finnish censorship.

The Finns have to make the best of a difficult situation; in comparison with Poland or Czechoslovakia they have been lucky. But what is one to say to the suggestion that Western Europe should "envy" Finland? Commenting from Helsinki on Mr. Rosenfeld's friendly advice, the Scandinavian correspondent of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* noted that ironically Finland herself depends on the Western presence in Europe, since her entire balancing act is based on it. "If the Soviet sphere of influence were to expand, Finland would inevitably lose the privilege of its marginal existence. As a Finnish parliamentarian has said, 'If Sweden and Norway were reduced to Finland's present status, Finland would soon become another Poland.' "

BROADLY speaking, two courses of action remain open to the United States in this situation. The first would involve a substantial withdrawal of American forces from Europe, over a period of, say, five or seven or ten years. The Europeans would be given ample notice and would be invited to make alternative preparations in collaboration with the United States. This would be shock therapy, administered on the theory that a Europe forced to face reality might be galvanized into action, provoked into accelerating the process of its own political and military integration. Unfortunately, in politics as in psychiatry, shock therapy entails large risks and can have unpredictable results. Given the present mental and physical condition of Europe, it seems as likely that a shock of this kind would result in utter resignation to the "inevitable" as in a strengthened will to survive. Some European countries might in fact prefer an accommodation with the Soviet Union on the best available terms, even though this would effectively thwart the efforts of other nations less affected by paralysis of the will. And it may also be argued that Europe cannot be saved in spite of itself, that partial absorption into the Soviet sphere of influence might not turn out to be so terrible after all, and that in any case shock therapy would teach a valuable lesson to all concerned.

It is difficult not to sympathize with this point of view, which lies behind much of the current American impatience with European "dependency."† Unfortunately, the lesson learned would be of little practical value to the nations being educated. Once within the Soviet sphere, there is no easy way out, as the Czechs, Poles, and Hungarians have learned to their sorrow. Within the Soviet orbit only Yugoslavia and Rumania have managed to achieve a limited measure of independence, and this is owing solely to the fact that power has been balanced in Europe by the U.S. and NATO. Which brings us back to the lesson of Finland; no balance of power, no freedom of maneuver.

The alternative approach would be to keep American forces in Europe at their present level or to reduce them only slightly, while attempting patiently and without illusion to induce the Europeans to do more for their own defense. The disadvantages of this approach have been mentioned already. Sheltering Western Europe from the realities of the changing balance of power may only delay a necessary learning process, and it would not prevent major domestic crises in France, Italy, and elsewhere. Psychologically too the effect may be undesirable, inasmuch as the impression would be created that America is somehow more interested in Europe's independence than is Europe itself. These are weighty considerations, but against them it may be argued that gaining time is of great importance, and that, in time, Europe might indeed overcome its present paralysis. In addition, real changes might still take place inside the Soviet Union. Ten years hence, a partial American withdrawal from Europe might be accomplished without incurring the same high risk as at present. Despite the uncertainties involved, this second course of action (or inaction) strikes many observers as the lesser of two evils.

And it was toward this second course of action that Henry Kissinger's recent call for a new

* *République Impériale*, Paris, 1973.

† On the European "mentality of dependence," see *Europe and America*, by Karl Kaiser (Columbia Books, 1973).

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"Atlantic Charter" seems to have been directed. European reaction to Mr. Kissinger's declaration was predictably sterile, a foretaste of problems yet to be overcome, but that should not be allowed to obscure the urgency of the task he set out to address. The U.S. stake in Europe is no smaller now than it was fifteen or thirty years ago. Even apart from economic interests, cultural ties, and all the many other strands of common background and concerns, there is a fundamental and overriding political issue to be considered, namely, the global balance of power. Some Americans have persuaded themselves that with the coming of détente the old concept of balance of power no longer obtains, that alliances are in effect no longer necessary, and that the formerly discredited notion of "Fortress America" has now become both practical and desirable. This attitude is psychologically intelligible in the light of Vietnam, but it bears no relation to the facts of world politics in 1973. Those who favor a lower profile for America in world affairs should as a matter of fact attribute greater, not lesser, importance, to alliances—unless of course they would also wish to advocate a retreat to total isolationism. The end of the Vietnam involvement is not the end of foreign policy; relations with Europe will be, must be, the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy for as far into the future as one can see.

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The Jewish Vote (Again)

Milton Himmelfarb

BEFORE the 1972 Presidential election, the thesis became popular that Jews were at long last about to vote according to their economic interests. Although American Jews had come economically to resemble the Episcopalians, the most prosperous of all white groups, their voting behavior continued to be most like the voting behavior of one of the least prosperous of all groups, the Puerto Ricans. Now, it was said, Jews, for reasons of economic self-interest, would vote in substantial numbers for Nixon while hypocritically covering this move to the Right with talk of Israel and the quota issue.

This thesis, however plausible it may have seemed, was not borne out by the results of the election. According to a study of the Jewish vote by the American Jewish Committee,* in 1972, as in 1968 and earlier, Jews voted more for the Democrat and less for the Republican than any other body of white voters—Protestants, Catholics, businessman, farmers, workers; even professors; even students. Moreover, McGovern did better with the more prosperous Jews than with the less.

East and West, North and South, the McGovern share of the Jewish votes cast was between 60 and 70 per cent, and the Nixon share between 30 and 40 per cent. Speculating in these pages (September 1972) on the likely Jewish vote for Nixon, I said that "the forecasts of people whose judgment I respect are between 25 and 35 per cent. My guess is 25 per cent." My guess was wrong—but not altogether wrong.

Between 1968 and 1972 there was a sharp drop in the proportion of eligible voters who actually voted. In 1972, for the country as a whole, that proportion was only about 55 per cent. The good-government forces (the cynics' "goo-goos") were predictably indignant about apathy, but the non-voters were not apathetic. They too were voting, in their fashion. As Lenin said about the peasants who deserted the Czar's army, they were voting with their feet.

As a group, American Jews are not apathetic voters. On the contrary. In 1968 the relatively few non-voting Jews affected hardly at all the distribution of Jewish votes between the two major candidates. In 1972 the many non-voting Jews cast a significant vote for the third candidate, Neither—neither McGovern nor Nixon. Of all *registered* Jewish voters, about 25 per cent voted for Nixon.

A parenthesis must be opened here. Non-voting, or abstention, can express itself in one of two ways. The first is simple: a registered voter does not go to the polls on election day. The second way is more concealed and more relative: a registered voter votes, but not for President. Normally a good many more votes are cast for President than for other offices. If the difference between the two shrinks, that can be because fewer people are abstaining from voting for a Congressman. In 1972 the difference shrank because a significant number of people who voted did not vote for President. In our study, where the Democratic congressional candidate was a shoo-in most Jewish abstainers apparently stayed home. In districts where there was a contest, a good many Presidential abstainers apparently went to the polls to vote for Congressman.

The United States Census reports many things —income, education, toilet facilities—but not religion. How do we know that a certain district is predominantly Jewish?

We are not completely dependent on the census. If we do not already know, informed local people will advise us to look for a concentration of Jews in Westport rather than Darien, in Bensonhurst rather than Greenpoint, in Skokie rather than Cicero. And the census is not altogether without its clues. Where it reports the major countries-of-origin of immigrants and their children as Italy, Ireland, and Sweden, do not expect to find masses of Jews. Where the major countries-of-origin are Russia (USSR), Poland, and Austria, and where you also have other indications—such as synagogues and local advice—it is not unreasonable to infer a substantial Jewish population.

TWO contiguous election districts in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn (the 35th and 37th, of the 46th Assembly District) are

* The study was carried out—in New York (and near it), Philadelphia, Miami Beach, and Los Angeles—by Howard Yagerman of the Committee's research staff, together with Professor Daniel J. Elazar and Miss Bernadette Stevens of Temple University, Professors Aaron Lipman and Harold Strauss of the University of Miami, and Richard MacNaughton, then in the Committee's Los Angeles office.

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indisputably Jewish. In 1968 they had a total of 2,142 registered voters, and in 1972 a total of 2,166. According to the 1970 census, the inhabitants were 51 per cent foreign-born, with a median age of 65, a median family income of $6,700, and a median education of 8.9 years. Here is how they voted:

ACTUAL VOTERS (PER CENT)*

	Democratic	*Republican*
1968	89	11
1972	71	29

But see the difference with three candidates rather than two. Note especially the rise in the Neither vote—that is, in abstention:

REGISTERED VOTERS (PER CENT)

	Dem.	*Rep.*	*Neither*
1968	82	10	8
1972	56	21	23

The Jewish districts most unlike those in Brighton Beach are in Great Neck Estates (15th and 16th election districts of the 16th Assembly District), just beyond the New York City line:

	Foreign-born	*Median age*	*Median income*	*Median education (years)*
Great Neck Estates	11%	49	$36,000	15.4
Brighton Beach	51%	65	$ 6,700	8.9

The political contrast is far less sharp than the social and economic:

ACTUAL VOTERS (PER CENT)

	1968		*1972*	
	Dem.	*Rep.*	*Dem.*	*Rep.*
Great Neck Estates	79	21	68	32
Brighton Beach	89	11	71	29

Which only proves—as if it needed proof—that Jews tend to vote Democratic, but unprosperous Jews tend to vote Democratic more than prosperous Jews (though in 1972 the Democratic difference between the unprosperous and prosperous shrank dramatically).

Those were the figures for actual voters. For registered voters the figures are more remarkable still:

REGISTERED VOTERS (PER CENT)

	Dem.	*1968 Rep.*	*Neither*
Great Neck Estates	66	18	17
Brighton Beach	82	10	8
		1972	
Great Neck Estates	57	27	17
Brighton Beach	56	21	23

In the three-way 1972 contest, $36,000 Great Neck Estates voted for McGovern *more* than $6,700 Brighton Beach!

MAYBE it would be imprudent to make too much of those Brighton Beach voters. They are so untypical—so foreign-born, so elderly, so unrich, so uncollege. Even for Jews, they were untypically low in 1968 voting abstention. When we consider their age, that abstention rate of 8 per cent is extraordinary: most boards of education would be glad to settle for an absence rate of 8 per cent in their high schools. Let us therefore put aside Brighton Beach and substitute nearby Sheepshead Bay (60th and 62nd election districts of the 42nd Assembly District; 1968 total registered 1,488; 1972 total 2,213):

	Foreign-born	*Median age*	*Median income*	*Median education (years)*
Sheepshead Bay	16%	43	$12,600	12.2

That is less untypical.

ACTUAL VOTERS (PER CENT)

	1968		*1972*	
	Dem.	*Rep.*	*Dem.*	*Rep.*
Great Neck Estates	79	21	68	32
Sheepshead Bay	89	11	62	38

As ever, three-column tables are still more revealing:

REGISTERED VOTERS (PER CENT)

	Dem.	*1968 Rep.*	*Neither*
Great Neck Estates	66	18	17
Sheepshead Bay	80	10	11
		1972	
Great Neck Estates	57	27	17
Sheepshead Bay	48	31	21

In 1968, that is, $12,600 Sheepshead Bay voted for Humphrey more than $36,000 Great Neck Estates; in 1972, Great Neck Estates voted for McGovern more than Sheepshead Bay.

In Philadelphia, for technical reasons, 1968 voting data and precise median incomes cannot be provided for two predominantly Jewish areas whose 1972 voting data are available, but what is left is nevertheless instructive:

DEMOCRATIC PERCENTAGES, PHILADELPHIA, 1972 (ACTUAL VOTERS)

Center (8th Ward, registration 1,933; upper middle)	65
Northeast (54th Ward, registration 7,086; lower middle)	61

In Philadelphia, too, upper-middle-class Jews voted more than lower-middle-class ones for McGovern. No one doubts that in 1968 the Jewish lower-middle class had voted more than the upper-middle class for Humphrey.

* All figures throughout are rounded to the nearest percentage point.

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In Florida it proved impossible to compare prosperous and unprosperous Jewish districts. The only predominantly Jewish area is South Beach, in Miami Beach. South Beach is like Brighton Beach, only more so—more immigrant (80 per cent), older (65+), poorer ($6,000). It is also much like Brighton Beach in its politics:

SOUTH BEACH *(Precincts 110, 112-115, 265, 289-291)** ACTUAL VOTERS (PER CENT)

1968		*1972*	
Dem.	*Rep.*	*Dem.*	*Rep.*
90	10	69	31

REGISTERED VOTERS (PER CENT)

1968			*1972*		
Dem.	*Rep.*	*Neither*	*Dem.*	*Rep.*	*Neither*
69	7	24	50	22	28

South Beach liked Humphrey in the 1972 primary. Unlike Florida in general and the elderly of Florida in particular, elderly South Beach had no use for Wallace.

Because South Beach is a place to which Jewish pensioners retire, the rather high abstention figure for 1968 may have been due as much to medical and technical reasons—e.g., not having lived there long enough—as to political ones.

Now to two predominantly Jewish areas in Los Angeles:

	Foreign-born	*Median age*	*Median income*	*Median education (years)*
South Beverlywood (precincts 2285 & 2288)	11%	40	$22,000	13.2
Fairfax (precincts 1432 & 1433)	32%	57	$9,300	12.4

(In 1968 the South Beverlywood registration was 882; in 1972, 771. In 1968 the Fairfax registration was 1,019; in 1972, 902.)

ACTUAL VOTERS (PER CENT)

	1968		*1972*	
	Dem.	*Rep.*	*Dem.*	*Rep.*
South Beverlywood	68	32	65	35
Fairfax	82	18	65	35

Of actual voters, therefore, $22,000 South Beverlywood gave McGovern the same 65 per cent as $9,300 Fairfax, although four years earlier South Beverlywood had given Humphrey 14 per cent less than Fairfax.

And again, we learn most when we look at all registered voters:

REGISTERED VOTERS (PER CENT)

	1968		
	Dem.	*Rep.*	*Neither*
South Beverlywood	58	27	15
Fairfax	67	17	16
South Beverlywood	51	28	21
Fairfax	46	25	29

West and East, in sum, the richer voted *less* than the poorer for the Democrat in 1968, but voted *more* for him in 1972.

It is especially instructive to compare richer and poorer for increases in Republican and Neither voting. Such a comparison reveals something of a Presidential Republican rise; but even more it reveals a Presidential Democratic decline combined with a Neither rise, especially among the less prosperous. Here are our five neighborhoods—three in or near New York, two in Los Angeles—by order of income:

CHANGES IN DEMOCRATIC, REPUBLICAN, AND NEITHER PERCENTAGES (1972 MINUS 1968)

	Dem.	*Rep.*	*Neither*
Great Neck Estates	− 11	+ 11	−
South Beverlywood	− 7	+ 1	+ 6
Sheepshead Bay	− 32	+ 22	+ 10
Fairfax	− 20	+ 8	+ 10
Brighton Beach	− 26	+ 11	+ 15

The Presidential Democrats sustained distinctively great losses among Jews in modest circumstances.

AN ILLUMINATING comparison remains to be made of two predominantly Jewish neighborhoods closely similar in nativity, age, income, and education—Great Neck (10th, 12th, and 14th election districts of the 16th Assembly District; registrations 2,222 and 2,584) and Manhattan Beach (79th and 80th election districts of the 45th Assembly District; registrations 1,252 and 1,525). Great Neck is near Great Neck Estates, Manhattan Beach near Sheepshead Bay and Brighton Beach:

	Foreign-born	*Median age*	*Median income*	*Median education (years)*
Great Neck	14%	39	$20,000	12.9
Manhattan Beach	17%	45	$19,000	12.7

In 1968 they resembled each other in their voting as much as in their social characteristics —with Great Neck, naturally, a bit less Democratic:

	1968				
	ACTUAL VOTERS (PER CENT)		REGISTERED VOTERS (PER CENT)		
	Dem.	*Rep.*	*Dem.*	*Rep.*	*Neither*
Great Neck	80	20	69	17	13
Manhattan Beach	84	16	74	13	12

In 1972, however, the resemblances were between $20,000 Great Neck and $36,000 Great Neck Estates, on the one hand, and $19,000

* Registration: 1968, 15,467; 1972, 18,962.

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Manhattan Beach and $12,600 Sheepshead Bay, on the other:

	1972 Actual Voters (Per Cent)		1972 Registered Voters (Per Cent)		
	Dem.	*Rep.*	*Dem.*	*Rep.*	*Neither*
G. N. Estates	68	32	57	27	17
Great Neck	69	31	54	22	24
Manhattan Beach	61	39	47	31	22
Sheepshead Bay	62	38	48	31	21

What happened? Why in 1972 this difference between Jews politically so similar in 1968; and so similar, too, in social and economic characteristics? Manhattan Beach is in New York City, Great Neck is not. If Jews in the suburbs are more fortunate—less worried—than Jews in the city, then in 1972 Great Neck may be regarded as having been to that extent "richer" than Manhattan Beach, and the regularity is undisturbed. Poorer Jews felt less able than richer ones to afford a vote for McGovern.

Of all our districts, Great Neck Estates alone shows no rise in abstention:

Abstention (Per Cent of Registered Voters)

	1968	*1972*	*Rise*
Great Neck Estates	17	17	0
South Beverlywood	15	21	6
Manhattan Beach	12	22	10
Sheepshead Bay	11	21	10
Great Neck	13	24	11
Fairfax	16	29	13
Brighton Beach	8	23	15

The higher the income, the less the rise in abstention:

	Rank by Income	Rank by Rise in Abstention
Great Neck Estates	1	7
South Beverlywood	2	6
Great Neck	3	5
Manhattan Beach	4	3
Sheepshead Bay	5	4
Fairfax	6	2
Brighton Beach	7	1

One reason for Great Neck Estates not showing a rise in abstention in 1972 may be that it had already experienced its rise, by anticipation, in 1968. In 1972 there were normal Democrats who could not vote for Nixon and would not vote for McGovern. In 1968 there had been proto-McGovernites—McCarthyites, etc.—who could not vote for Nixon and would not vote for Humphrey. (Actually, though perhaps not in Great Neck Estates, some of those people are known to have voted for Nixon in 1968. Their purpose was to weaken the grip of Humphrey and his friends on the Democratic party. Humphrey came close to winning in 1968. If he had won, McGovern could not have been nominated in 1972.)

Though Great Neck Estates is quite comfortable indeed, thank you, it is not what a purist would call *rich*. Really rich people are those with an income of $100,000, say, and especially with the capital that may be expected to go with such an income. What does our study reveal about the really rich? Nothing. Voting-district returns are too coarse for sifting millionaires.

A final point about the study: How were all those voting districts chosen? In each city the local researchers chose their districts independently, well before election day. Their principles of choice were that the districts had to be predominantly Jewish, and to differ among themselves in income, education, etc. By election day the 1970 census and 1968 voting figures had been penciled in, and it remained only to wait for the 1972 figures. In short, districts were not chosen so as to support a thesis. Yet the data cohere. They show us the American Jews we recognize, as they have been and as they are.

BEFORE the election I wrote:

> It has been said that American Jews are deserting the Democratic candidate because of economic conservatism—that is, because so many of us are rich, and McGovern has a soak-the-rich tax program. Whether so many of us are rich is questionable . . . but certainly, on average, the Jews of Scarsdale are richer than the Jews of [former] Congressman Celler's district in Brooklyn. I will bet that the Jews of Scarsdale go for McGovern more than the Jews of Celler's congressional district—an odd sort of economic conservatism.

Scarsdale, Great Neck Estates, what's the difference?

What did our moralists do? They scolded us more or less privately, and denounced us very publicly, for selfishness and hypocrisy. "Israel," they proclaimed, was only our code word for dollars: with our mouths we said we were for Nixon because he was better for Israel, but in our hearts we were against McGovern because we thought him worse for our moneybags. "We," who were rich, were going to break with a great tradition. We were going to become contemptibly normal. No longer would we be voting to the left of our bank accounts.

Conspicuous among the moralists were a few Reform rabbis. Heine said, "God will forgive me, *c'est son métier*." These rabbis engage in moralistic preaching, that is *their* métier.

By the nature of Jewish denominationalism in the United States, it is easy for Reform rabbis not to know Jews who are less than prosperous. It was therefore easy to misjudge the moderate drop in the Democratic voting of the prosperous —for the significant thing is not that there was a drop, but that it was so moderate. On the face of it, the rabbis in question knew little about Sheepshead Bay, or Brighton Beach, or Fairfax, or even Manhattan Beach.

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For my part, the mistake I made was to advance "Jewish" explanations for the changes that were taking place. Such explanations were unnecessary. Is Manhattan Beach so much more concerned than Great Neck for Israel? Is South Beverlywood so much less worried than Fairfax about quotas? Apparently, Jews did not need Jewish-label arguments for their voting. The only effect of a Jewish-label argument seems to have been negative, or rather neutralizing. Essentially, Israel was neutralized as a reason for preferring McGovern to Nixon. Some Jews allowed themselves to vote for Nixon, and others to abstain from voting Presidentially, who would have felt obligated to vote for McGovern if they had thought him better than Nixon for Israel.

Moral problems are not easy, and for moralists they should be even less easy than for the rest of us. When moralists identify our moral problems for us and exhort us about them, but act as if they believe that they have solved their own problems without difficulty, they are less than fully persuasive. When moralizing rabbis preach to Jews on the Jewish vote, should they fail to entertain the possibility that their notion of political morality may look to others like a cultural preference, affordable, of the advanced Jewish upper-middle class? Should they take so lightly their moral duty to know what they are talking about? By their very title, rabbis are presumed to be authorities on Jewish matters. Is it moral for rabbis, and above all for the moralists among them, to miseducate Jews about the Jews? Is it moral for them, and not least when addressing Gentiles, to slander the Jews?

In sports, virtue—competence, knowledge—is rewarded, on the whole, and vice—incompetence, ignorance—is punished. A player or coach or manager cannot with impunity show he does not know his business. That may not be much of a morality, but it is a beginning. One could wish to see it extended into more exalted spheres than sport.

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Books in Review

Rhetoric and Reality

THE KENNEDY PROMISE: THE POLITICS OF EXPECTATION. By HENRY FAIRLIE. *Doubleday. 364 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by JAMES Q. WILSON

INEVITABLY, the search for an answer to the question of what went wrong in the 1960's must lead us back to John F. Kennedy. Lyndon Johnson was, of course, thoroughly excoriated for Vietnam, but even his worst critics have begun to suspect that a foreign policy which could have led us into Vietnam in the way it did was no spur-of-the-moment creation, that it had links with the past. This view is all the more plausible when one realizes that Mr. Johnson did not hire his own foreign-policy architects, he inherited them from his predecessor, and his predecessor was not Richard Nixon but John Kennedy.

Furthermore, the rage and frustration of many at what happened in the 1960's are so great that they cannot be adequately discharged by saying that the events to which objection is made were the result of miscalculation or well-intentioned error. We cannot hate a man who makes an honest mistake, and since we want to hate, more than a mistake must be involved. Radicals have one answer: our expeditions in Vietnam, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic were an expression of capitalist imperialism, the foreordained result of a system struggling to fuel its domestic economy with war expenditures or make secure its overseas investments with military power.

Most critics of the war find the radical explanation unconvincing, in large part because they cannot imagine that an imperialist nation would spend $100 billion to protect a few hundred millions of investments, if in fact the United States had investments of even that magnitude in Southeast Asia. And of course they are right: the radical explanation is preposterous. Whatever Harold Geneen may have asked our government to do in Chile, neither he nor any other businessman asked it to send half-a-million men to Vietnam.

But if our country did not get involved because it was objectively imperialistic, might it not have become involved because it was subjectively imperialistic: that is, because it had a conviction of its own worldwide manifest destiny, its obligation to impose a world order, and its claim to world leadership? Contemporary critics of the "cold-war mentality" have, of course, been making just this charge for some time, but since many of these critics were admirers, or even servants, of Mr. Kennedy, they have not been in a position to offer a theory quite as sweeping as their anger requires or their assumptions imply.

Now comes Henry Fairlie, the conservative English reporter and essayist, who has no compunction born of local political entanglements about making the full case. Indeed, given his admiration of Dwight Eisenhower and Robert Taft, he is in a position to make his case root and branch, for he need not hedge his remarks with *pro-forma* declarations that American conservatives were also bad fellows. Nor, given his view of the United States, does he feel obliged to burden his explanation of what happened with any moral criticism, or indeed much evaluation at all, of the substance of what happened. The United States is of course an "imperial power" with global responsibilities and that it should become involved in Vietnam is neither shocking nor unexpected. Fairlie is dismayed not by the effort which this country made in Vietnam, but "by the manner in which it was made." His concern is with the "political error." The nature of that error becomes evident only as one reads through the book and is rarely stated very exactly, but the *reason* for that error is presented on almost every page in the clearest possible language.

The reason, in Fairlie's view, is this: The "political method" of the Kennedys, John and Robert, suffered from a serious fault—it was hyperactive. They posed as rational, laconic, skeptical, and "cool" men, the ultimate pragmatists, but in fact they brought to office zeal, energy, and elaborate rhetoric such that if one asks what they wanted, what goal they sought, one must respond that *what they wanted was activity*: "Activity was their method." They sought the "moral leadership of an entire society" such that they "would rule its arts, they would rule its science, they would rule its letters, they would rule its fashion, they would rule its taste; and all to create in the society an elevated sense of national purpose." In ironic opposition to this style, Fairlie counterposes the remark of Harold Macmillan: "If the people want a sense of purpose, they should get it from their archbishops."

THE vision of politics that Fairlie imputes to the Kennedys is what has been called—and indeed, what he himself comes close to calling—Caesarism. The Kennedys had no sense of the limits of politics and the limits of American power nor any belief that politics ought to be confined to matters that are truly political instead of being set loose on the culture and tastes of a nation. In his commentary on the famous passage from the Kennedy inaugural address about asking what one can do for one's country, Fairlie notes that fifteen years earlier Kennedy had

JAMES Q. WILSON, *professor of government at Harvard, contributed "Liberalism versus Liberal Education" to our June 1972 number.*

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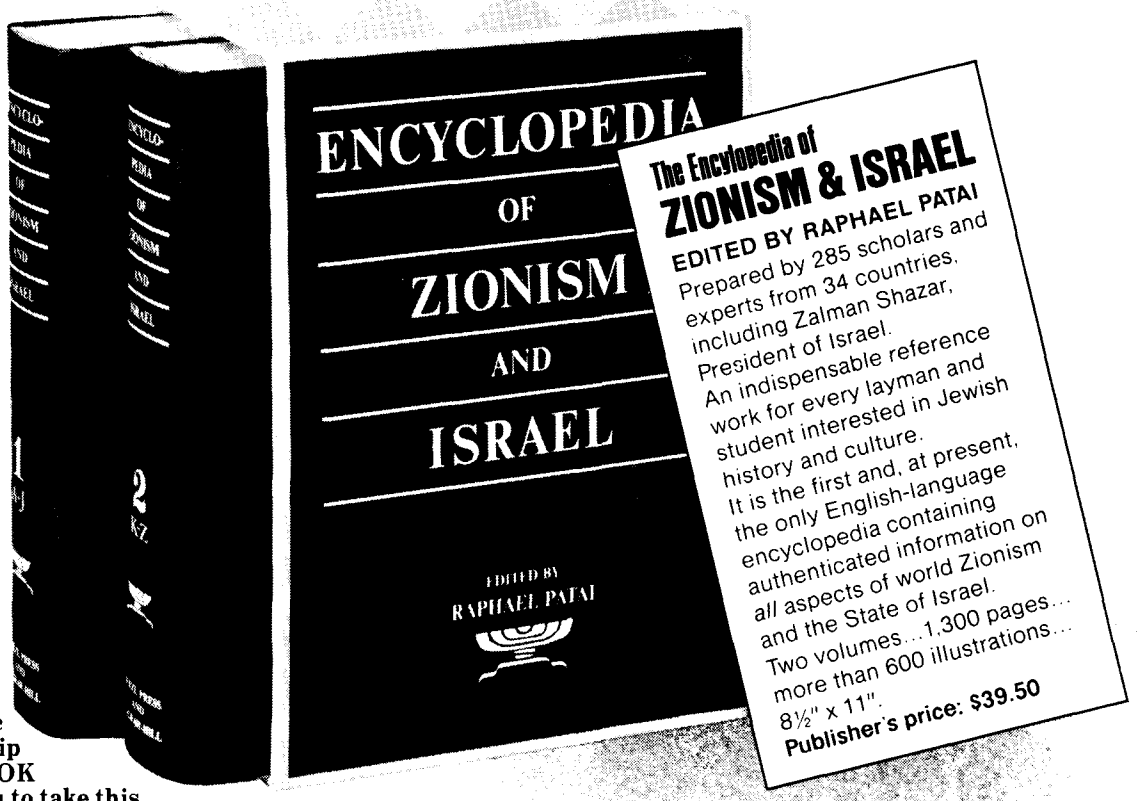
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copied down a similar sentiment he found in the pages of Rousseau. The "ask not" phrase is, to Fairlie, a contemporary statement of the theory of the General Will, of the individual's obligation to subordinate himself to larger and truer interests, and of a concept of "voluntary totalitarianism" to which Kennedy "was attracted as a young man."

The bulk of Fairlie's book is an analysis of Kennedy rhetoric aimed at pointing out how this country's view of its international responsibilities was flawed by this overweening ambition, this blind confidence in the rightness of American purpose and in the obligations of world leadership. The commitment to "excellence," so much in vogue at the time, was part and parcel of the commitment to the idea of an American empire. The Eisenhower years were marked by quietude and caution and thus could be interpreted by American intellectuals as years of apathy and mediocrity; the call to excellence was a call to activity, and activity meant energy in pursuit of agreed-upon (but generally unstated) goals. Without reflecting much about ends, and without being overly scrupulous about means so long as they were "pragmatic" and "effective," the Kennedys led us into the "madness of empire."

So goes the charge: the country suffered from a state of collective megalomania induced by an excess of rhetoric and exemplified by a vision of "vigor."

I do not believe it. Mr. Fairlie is a brilliant and subtle commentator, and the texture of his account is far richer in interesting detail than can be conveyed by any quick summary, but his general argument is never supported by anything that links it to political reality. He takes the rhetoric of Kennedy and subjects it to his own formidable skills as an analyst of rhetoric, but the result is only more rhetoric. I dearly wish Mr. Fairlie had been the Kennedy speechwriter instead of Theodore Sorensen: not only is the former an infinitely better writer than the latter, but I happen to prefer the former's caution, balance, and prudence to the latter's addiction to ding-dong phrases. But I do not believe Mr. Fairlie has explained much about American politics to us and in particular he has not explained—he has only deeply confused—the problem of what went wrong in the 60's.

A foreign observer is likely to attach great significance to political rhetoric as opposed to government decisions precisely because, to a foreigner, the former data are more accessible than the latter. And a foreign observer from Great Britain may attach special importance to the rhetorical side of politics since, in his homeland, the ceremonial aspects of governance are more important and the inner workings of the ministries more cloaked from public scrutiny than they are in this country.

But whatever the reason for the assumption that what Mr. Kennedy *said* in his public statements is revelatory of what he did and why he did it, it is clearly only an assumption, and I think a most problematic one. The core of American national politics is the Presidency and the struggle to win it; this requires the heavy use of rhetoric to find and mobilize a constituency. (In Great Britain, by contrast, the principal audience for rhetoric is the House of Commons, an exacting and skeptical group of political professionals.) Almost every Presidential candidate gives way to bombast and fantastical claims about what government can or should accomplish: Dwight Eisenhower, after all, led a "crusade" in his campaign, Wendell Willkie spoke about "one world," and Franklin Roosevelt told a hungry, unemployed, hurting nation that the only thing (!) it had to fear was "fear itself." Whether any of the men elected become prisoners of their claims, or many voters believe those claims, are open questions.

There was not much evidence that the Kennedy rhetoric delivered to him the "moral leadership" of the nation. He barely won election in 1960 and might well have lost a re-election bid in 1964. Congress was hardly under his sway and his standing in the opinion polls never reached the peaks achieved by his rhetorically less flamboyant predecessor or successor. To be sure, he captivated a large proportion of the cosmopolitan elite, a not insignificant achievement or one without consequences, but that is only to say that Kennedy had a flair for producing what that elite most likes to consume—style.

Furthermore, the "imperial" rhetoric Kennedy employed was, substantively at least, very much in tune with the prevailing national consensus at the time. In 1960 we were in the waning years of that strong sense of national purpose first created by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, welded into an awesome commitment during World War II, and kept alive after the war by the fact of Soviet hostility and domestic fears of Communism. Vietnam destroyed that consensus—perhaps it would have collapsed in any event as a generation came of age that knew nothing of Hitler and Stalin—but when Kennedy spoke, he spoke for a generation that had been in the war, had shared and shaped that purpose, and that was in no mood to see this country once again turn its back on the world or on the possibility of aggression. Kennedy no doubt made extreme or at least undiscriminating statements of that purpose, but as Fairlie himself admits, what national leader can ever afford to give a balanced statement on matters that concern his followers deeply?

Fairlie may speak disparagingly today of the "cold-war mentality" and quote approvingly from the *Nation*, but such *post-factum* epithets are no substitute for a careful appraisal of what the posture of the United States should have been in 1960 in the face of expansionist policies of regimes that we knew to be our enemies. In short, what is needed is an analysis, not of what Kennedy said, but of what he did, how he did it, and what he might have done.

And to the extent he deals with these matters in the latter part of his book, Fairlie is superb. He argues what I believe was in fact

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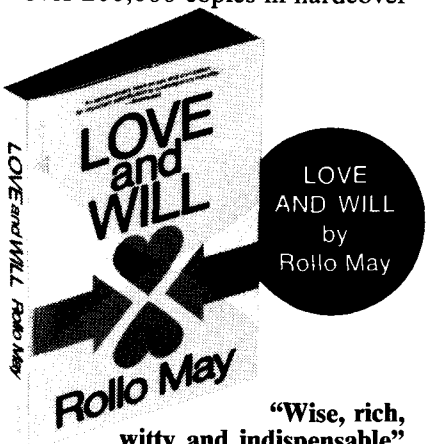

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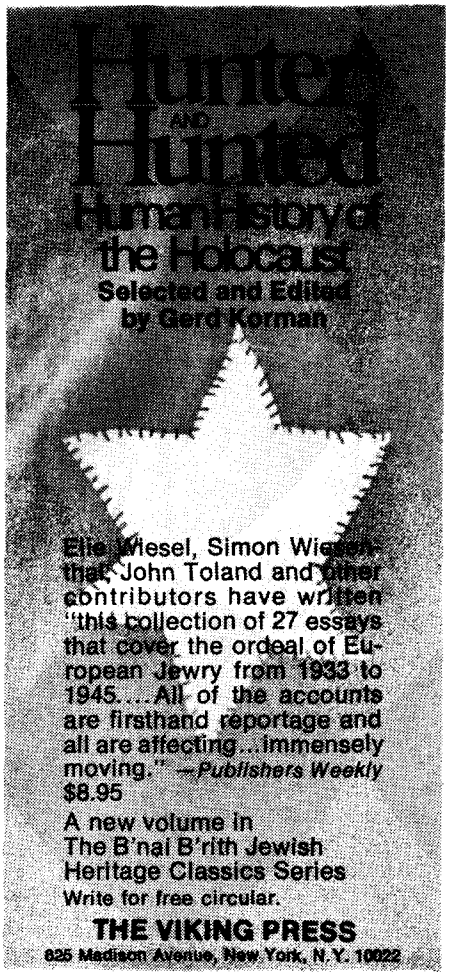
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the case: Kennedy was not only a *poor*, but a *mischievous* political executive, lacking in any experience in the management of large affairs, overly attentive to the verbal skills of "gifted amateurs" and "in-and-outers," wrongly contemptuous of the federal bureaucracy (or at least contemptuous for the wrong reasons), and persistently inclined to attempt to govern by means of personal intervention and the waging of administrative guerrilla warfare on the slopes of a massive, complex, but not incompetent executive establishment. Kennedy not only sent a few thousand "advisers" to Vietnam without much sense of what they were supposed to do, or how, or to what end; he also, as Fairlie notes, sent them all over the globe and indeed into many parts of our own government.

The real book to be written about the Presidency in 1960-63 should not be about the "Kennedy Promise" but about the Kennedy performance, not about the "Politics of Expectation" but about the *politics of management*. Comparing Dean Rusk's State Department and Robert McNamara's Defense Department, and understanding Kennedy's relations with each, and viewing those matters with the gift of hindsight about whose advice was right and whose wrong, will tell us more about why things turned out as they did, at least internationally, than any effort to find the roots of Kennedy rhetoric in the novels of John Buchan.

Judaica

THE STUDY OF JUDAISM: BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS. Introduction by JACOB NEUSNER. *Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith/Ktav. 229 pp. $12.50.*

Reviewed by ERICH ISAAC

THE purpose of this collection of bibliographical essays, as stated in the introduction by Jacob Neusner, is to provide guidance for "serious students in the field of religion who are not experts in the study of Judaism." In addition, Neusner suggests that librarians will find the volume helpful for filling in gaps in their collections, and that teachers in the newly proliferating departments of Jewish studies will find it useful in the planning of courses.

But there would seem to be another, albeit unstated, purpose prompting this effort, stemming from the unease that many Jews currently feel with regard to developments both in the academic world and in the broader society. For instance, the rise of ethnic-studies programs, some of which are staffed by individuals whose attempts at "consciousness-raising" include frankly anti-Semitic indoctrination, is a cause for anxiety on two scores: on the one hand, academic integrity is compromised, and on the other, anti-Semitism is purveyed as academic "knowledge." A further cause for apprehension is the growing popularity of religious-studies programs; in themselves unobjectionable, such programs have on occasion given shelter to clerics whose faith in religion has lapsed and who have replaced the relevance-that-failed with the new relevance of revolution. Finally, there is concern over the growth of religious movements of withdrawal among young people, some of which show signs of becoming vehicles of millenarian action. Jewish youth, in disconcerting numbers, are flocking to such movements.

It is therefore not surprising that there should be efforts on the part of Jews to counter these developments, and the present volume, in addition to its more explicit purpose, would seem to represent such an effort. The general strategy it embodies is one that has long enjoyed favor among Jewish defense agencies, consonant as it is with a traditional Jewish penchant for interpreting all problems confronting Jews as rooted in ignorance, and capable of being dispelled by education and knowledge.

The essays themselves, it should be noted, do not follow a uniform format. Some provide annotated bibliographies, others do not;

ERICH ISAAC, *who teaches at the City University of New York, is a specialist in the geography of religion.*

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some have long introductions preceding the bibliographical material, some very brief ones; even the style of citation varies from essay to essay. More seriously, quality and comprehensiveness also vary sharply. Frank Talmage's essay-*cum*-bibliography on "Judaism on Christianity: Christianity on Judaism," which shows how exponents of the two faiths viewed and continue to view each other, provides a superb introduction to its subject, and its citations are close to comprehensive. An incidental lesson to be learned from the essay is the gravity of the translation gap from Hebrew into English. Such an important work as *Golah venekhar* (1954) by Yehezkel Kaufmann, known in this country primarily for his monumental *History of the Religion of Israel,* has not yet, for example, been translated into English.

FRITZ ROTHSCHILD and Seymour Siegel's "Modern Jewish Thought" and Henry Friedlander's "The Holocaust: Anti-Semitism and the Jewish Catastrophe" are of equally high quality; likewise the essay on "Rabbinic Sources" (i.e., Targum, Talmud, and Midrash) by John T. Townsend, who appends to an informed discussion of this material a bibliography old-fashioned in its comprehensiveness. Although Townsend, like other contributors, makes his selections predominantly from among studies published in English, he also includes major German and Hebrew works. I noted only a few significant omissions, most notably the important work by Yehuda Feliks on *Kil'ayim I-II* ("Mixed Sowing, Breeding, and Grafting"). One also wishes, given the general excellence of Townsend's bibliography, that the reference works and study aids had been expanded so as to include some of the leading works of topical specialists, for example, I. Löw or U. Feldmann (on fauna and agriculture), J. Preuss (on Talmudic medicine), A. Reifenberg, W. Wirgin, and S. Mandel (on coinage), B. Kisch (on weights and measures), as well as such general introductions to rabbinic sources as those of E. Z. Melamed and E. Urbach.

If Townsend is perhaps overly restrictive in his definition of the subject, Richard B. Bavier,* in "Judaism in New Testament Times," defines his bibliographic task widely, but then omits crucial works. Thus he includes Rostovtzeff's volumes on the social and economic history of the Hellenistic and Roman world, but leaves out W. W. Tarn's *Hellenistic Civilization* and E. Will's *Historie politique du monde hellenistique.* While A.H.M. Jones's 1938 work *The Herods of Judea* is listed, his *The Later Roman Empire* of 1964 is not; and certainly A. N. Sherwin White's *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* is pertinent to the subject at hand. With the exception of Elias

* Bavier, incidentally, is still a student and can hardly qualify as an expert (as yet) in the field. The authors of the other essays are all recognized "professionals" in their particular areas.

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Bickerman's *Der Gott der Makkabäer,* all the sources cited by Bavier are either English-language originals or else works that have been translated into English, yet the restriction to English is a serious weakness in dealing with this era. For not merely is Will omitted, but likewise such important works as D. A. Schlatter's *Geschichte Israels von Alexander des Grossen bis Hadrian,* E. Meyer's *Ursprung . . . des Christentums,* and J. Juster's *Les Juifs dans l'empire romaine.* On Philo, the works of Goodenough, Wolfson, and Sandmel are quoted and L. Feldman is cited, but such an important scholar as Isaac Heinemann is ignored. The subject of sectarianism, apart from the Pharisees and some references to the Zealots, is not treated at all, and the voluminous literature on the Dead Sea finds is neither discussed nor listed. Modern Israeli scholarship is omitted altogether. The significant, and in some areas, revolutionary scholarship of men like G. Alon, M. Stern, S. Safrai, and Y. M. Grintz, although some of it has appeared in English, must thus wait for future bibliographies. Finally, I find it difficult to take seriously a bibliography of the New Testament period which does not include such basic works as T. Reinach's *Textes d'auteurs grecs et romains relatifs au Judaisme* or Tcherikover, Fuks, and Stern's *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum.*

LLOYD GARTNER's "The Contemporary Jewish Community" also strikes me as flawed in important respects. For example, his list of pertinent periodicals omits *Jewish Social Studies* and the *Jewish Journal of Sociology.* The sections of the bibliography dealing with Zionism and Israel inexplicably contain no references whatever to the Revisionist movement; omission of such books as J. B. Schechtman's two-volume biography of Vladimir Jabotinsky or his history (with Ben Ari) of the Revisionist movement is inexcusable in a bibliography of this kind. The section dealing with diplomacy leaves out such important sources as R. H. S. Crossman's *Palestine Mission,* James G. McDonald's *My Mission*

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in Israel 1948-51, and Bartley Crum's *Behind the Silken Curtain*.

Other sections of Gartner's essay are equally incomplete, particularly the section on Oriental Jewish communities. It is simply not true to state as he does that "The serious study of Jews in Muslim and Oriental lands during modern times has barely begun." Apart from the important studies in this area of S. D. Goitein and H. Z. Hirschberg, one might note such works as L. Cabot-Briggs and N. Lami Guede's *No More Forever: A Saharan Jewish Town*, M. Cohen and M. M. Moreno's *Gli Ebrei in Libia*, M. Eisenbeth's *Les Juifs de l'Afrique du Nord* and *Les Juifs au Maroc*, M. D. Japhet on *The Jews of India*, H. S. Kehimkar's *The History of Bene Israel of India*, S. Landshut's *Jewish Communities in the Muslim Countries of the Middle East*, and Erich Brauer's *Ethnologie der Jemenitischen Juden*, to say nothing of the voluminous literature in Hebrew. None of these works is included, the only citations on Oriental Jewish communities being Yitzhak Ben Zvi's *The Exiled and the Redeemed* and André Chouraqui's *Between East and West*. Unfortunately, such bibliographies, remiss in their scope, tend to reinforce the opinion that Oriental Jews are discriminated against by their Western brethren, even as subjects of study.

ONE final criticism: the topic of political Zionism gets comparatively little attention—indeed, there is no separate essay on the subject—and even the traditional Jewish affirmation of the tie to Zion is neglected. Yet the Zionist revolution and its achievements are issues central to modern Jewry, historically as crucial as the Holocaust. The absence of an essay on Zionism, to my mind, constitutes a basic defect in the conception and planning of the book. Still, despite my various demurrals, the fundamental idea of the volume is a good one, so good in fact that I hope there will be other volumes of this sort—or perhaps an improved edition of the present one—to cover, in solid bibliographical fashion, the significant Jewish issues of our time.

A Neglected Modern

PAUL NIZAN: COMMITTED LITERATURE IN A CONSPIRATORIAL WORLD. By W. D. REDFERN. *Princeton University Press. 232 pp. $9.00.*

Reviewed by JAMES ATLAS

IT OFTEN happens that we come to the work of a neglected writer through the tributes of an eminent one: T. W. Adorno on Walter Benjamin, Saul Bellow on Isaac Rosenfeld, and in Paul Nizan's case, Jean-Paul Sartre. Not that these writers' reputations depended on posthumous resurrection; during their own lives what they wrote circulated among a critical and appreciative, if limited, circle, although all three tended to enjoy a more numerous readership in their journalism than in their other, less ephemeral work. When their close friends have been called on to remember them, the portraits that emerge seem on occasion to conceal ambivalence, guilt, and the sense of a terrible, silent loss. In reading them, the thought of ever possessing these writers on our own threatens to become impossible, simply because their effect on those who knew them in their time was so intense, their active relationship to their own moment so intimate. If this is true of Rosenfeld and Benjamin, it is even more true of Nizan, who could be said to have distilled, in both his acts and in his novels, the essence of Europe's most complicated modern era, between the two world wars.

Unlike that of the Surrealists, whose activities have been overdocumented in America, the literature produced by writers directly involved in French politics during the late 20's and 30's, whether as Marxists or fellow-travelers, tends to be passed over. Sartre and Merleau-Ponty are considered philosophers, Simone Weil a theologian, Henri Lefebvre a political theorist. It should be recalled, though, that these writers respond-

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ed to the European crisis with overt political action; all either joined the Communist party, or at least discerned in Marxism a plausible mode of salvation. Simone Weil became a political organizer, while the others devoted themselves to journalism. None of them, however, possessed Nizan's sheer political intelligence, his anger, or his awareness of the general as it appeared inscribed in the specific, immediate situation; none, in other words, could have been called a revolutionary. Perhaps it is because Nizan didn't live long enough to become a survivor, to witness what Sartre calls the "deep-rooted impotence" experienced among left-wing intellectuals after 1945, that (with four exceptions) his work remains untranslated and unread.

WHEN Nizan was killed in World War II, he was thirty-five, and had published three novels, a memoir, and a polemic against the French philosophical establishment, as well as *Chronique de septembre* (on the Munich Pact in 1939) and innumerable articles and reviews written in haste for *L'Humanité, Le Monde,* and *Ce Soir*, a Communist "Front" paper. Since his days as a student at the École Normale Supérieure, where he was a classmate of Sartre, Nizan had been a brilliant and prolific writer, quick to sense the sources of his own hostility and articulate them in print. It was a time when, as he wrote in *La Conspiration*, a disguised portrait of Nizan and his radical companions in their early twenties: "A young man feels so insecure that he wants to imprison the future and get some reliable assurances; he's the only one with guts enough to demand everything and to think he's been robbed if he doesn't get it." As a *normalien*, the son of a lower-middle-class railroad engineer (later depicted in *Antoine Bloyé*), Nizan had chosen what was then a more conspicuous, less strenuous model of revolt: Baudelaire, the decadent *flâneur* in fine clothes. In the charged atmosphere of Paris, though, Nizan's natural inclinations toward the concrete conspired with his impatience before the rather doctrinaire, abstract qualities of his instructors and a vivid hatred of the bourgeoisie to promote a heightened social consciousness. Nizan's real conversion to Marxism occurred soon after, when he lived in Aden as a tutor during 1926-27. The result, related in *Aden Arabie*, a rude, animated diatribe against colonialism, capitalism, and European culture, was a sharpening of Nizan's ideological tendencies, in his own words, a desire "to come back stripped for action."

During the years that followed, Nizan's life, though distinguished by an exceptional discipline and energy, was not untypical of intellectuals in that era; like Aragon and other Communist writers, Nizan taught in the Université Ouvrière, worked with the Association des Écrivains et Artistes Revolutionnaires, lectured, traveled to Russia, and contributed without respite to the periodicals. What elevates Nizan is something else; amid all this, and in opposition to the Socialist-Realist line which marred the works of his contemporaries, he wrote three novels that deserve the same serious regard awarded to Sartre's *Les Chemins de la liberté* and Malraux's *La Condition humaine*. Not only was Nizan innocent of betraying his adherence to Marxism in these works, he demonstrated the possibilities available in writing a "committed" literature.

Nizan achieved real prominence during the 30's in France. *Antoine Bloyé* was applauded upon publication in 1933, and came close to winning the Prix Goncourt, which went to Malraux; his political writings reached a wide audience; and all radical students in Paris read *Aden Arabie*. But his name is seldom mentioned in comprehensive studies of Marxism and literature like Peter Demetz's *Marx, Engels, and the Poets* or Jürgen Rühle's *Literature and Revolution*. Moreover, until the recent publication of *Antoine Bloyé** only *Les Chiens de Garde, Aden Arabie,* and *Le Cheval de Troie* (in 1937) had appeared in English translation. Not until the publication in 1960 of two crucial documents, a chapter in Merleau-Ponty's *Signes* devoted to Nizan, and Sartre's Preface to the second edition of *Aden Arabie*, was a modest interest reawakened in this "vigorous corpse" (the words are Sartre's). Now we have W. D. Redfern's sympathetic investigation.

WHAT informs Redfern's portrait is the sense of Nizan's "tragic optimism," and it is through the lens of his own political hopes that Redfern examines why "his kind of integrity is often undervalued or overlooked." Quoting Nizan, Redfern admits in the introduction that his "own stance is partisan: 'Why be coy? Why shouldn't we sing?' Modesty has always struck me as a suspect quality." Thus warned, we shouldn't be surprised when, later on, he demolishes Sartre's character, silences the loud slanders that erupted when Nizan resigned from the Communist party in 1939, or insists that "Nizan is the only French Communist novelist who expressed a genuine sensibility and intelligence." Because Nizan *did* sponsor violent sentiments among those who knew him, and because his own writings exhibit such a rebellious tension, Redfern's partial, idiomatic voice appears wedded to the subject. Even now, Nizan needs to be defended in this way, and Redfern has been intrepid in entering the warren of opinions which surround his political conduct during the war. After his death, a campaign was instigated to denounce Nizan; he was accused of espousing "national Communism," of having been a police informer, while Henri Lefebvre didn't hesitate to interpret Nizan's novels in the light of these suspicions, purporting to discover in them evidence of the writer's inward vacillation.

Once having disposed of these charges, Redfern feels called upon to extricate Nizan from Sartre's portentous evocations; his complaint is that Sartre's celebration of Nizan reveals ambivalence, even unconscious condescension, and proposes that "He, not Nizan, is 'the negator *par excellence*,' the gaping hole in the core of 20th-century European literary and philosophical being, which, like a

* Translated by Edmund Stevens, Introduction by Richard Elman, Monthly Review Press, 250 pp., $6.95.

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building excavation in the city, attracts crowds of gaping spectators." What motivates this bitter critique? The causes, I think, are two: Nizan's *engagement*, the resourcefulness and imagination with which he reconciled politics and literature, while Sartre dilated; and the schematic, excessively psychoanalytic method Sartre used in remembering Nizan, the same dubious omniscience evident in his books on Flaubert and Baudelaire. If Redfern's intention is "to sort out the apocryphal from the indulgent and spiteful and to find the plausible," then he has pursued his cause with admirable verve.

Paul Nizan is more than a vendetta, though, more than a simple exercise in vindication; Nizan's novels receive close scrutiny, a chapter being devoted to each. Perhaps these discussions are over-elaborate, in that Redfern decided to summarize the novels' plots at length; perhaps also the digressions, in which Irving Howe's *Politics and the Novel* and other random, though valuable, texts are explored, could have been excised. Nevertheless, such exegesis is warranted, since the novels conceal within themselves Nizan's own situation, the lived realities which he borrowed in their composition. Nizan's relation to his material was both delicate and complicated, especially so in *Antoine Bloyé*, where the autobiographical elements are subverted, the life chronicled being not his own, but his father's. What comes to be remarkable about Antoine Bloyé, a railroad worker whose entire life is embraced within the narrative, is the recognition that he possesses no remarkable qualities at all; in Redfern's words, "He is ordinary, and complicated, unfulfilled and yet deserving to be described."

Nizan's intention, and the politics which informed it, was to reveal the *texture* of alienation. Denied "*une affirmation de l'homme*," Bloyé exists and dies without ever having lived, and Nizan clarifies the specifically social character of this death-in-life through the repetition of economic motifs: the worker "fastened to a dying animal," capitalism; the sense that "his life is a permanent transaction"; above

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all, the "useless image of himself" mirrored in nonproductive labor. Through Nizan's father, rather than through that special *Angst* which obtained among intellectuals like the son, it was possible to locate oppressive capital's actual victims within the working class.

Eloquent, human, meditative, in no sense could Nizan's novels be labeled Naturalist or Social Realist; Redfern compares them to Stendhal, and notes that Nizan "forms a bridge between the political novels of Stendhal and those of Koestler." The reference to Stendhal is more appropriate; Nizan deserves to be classified among those writers who comprise the tradition of European realism.

Newswoman

DOROTHY THOMPSON: A LEGEND IN HER TIME. By MARION K. SANDERS. *Houghton Mifflin. 428 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by DOROTHY RABINOWITZ

No one with a memory of America in the 1940's can be quite free of associations to the name of Dorothy Thompson. The name was a household word to a degree that few journalists ever enjoy, even by the media-besotted standards of the present: for the 30's and 40's the range of her influence was truly remarkable. Through her syndicated columns and her radio commentaries she became the first popular voice raised against Nazism, and it was characteristic of her that, having identified the peril to democracy that Germany posed, she was ready for America to take arms at once. In a period of entrenched isolationism, when even such international-minded organizations as the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies stopped well short of endorsing a war against Hitler, she called for universal conscription; and after the fall of Dunkirk, she addressed short-wave messages to the British which might, in their orotund passion, have come from Churchill himself.

In all of these activities, the

DOROTHY RABINOWITZ, *a regular contributor, is the author of* The Other Jews *and co-author of* Home Life.

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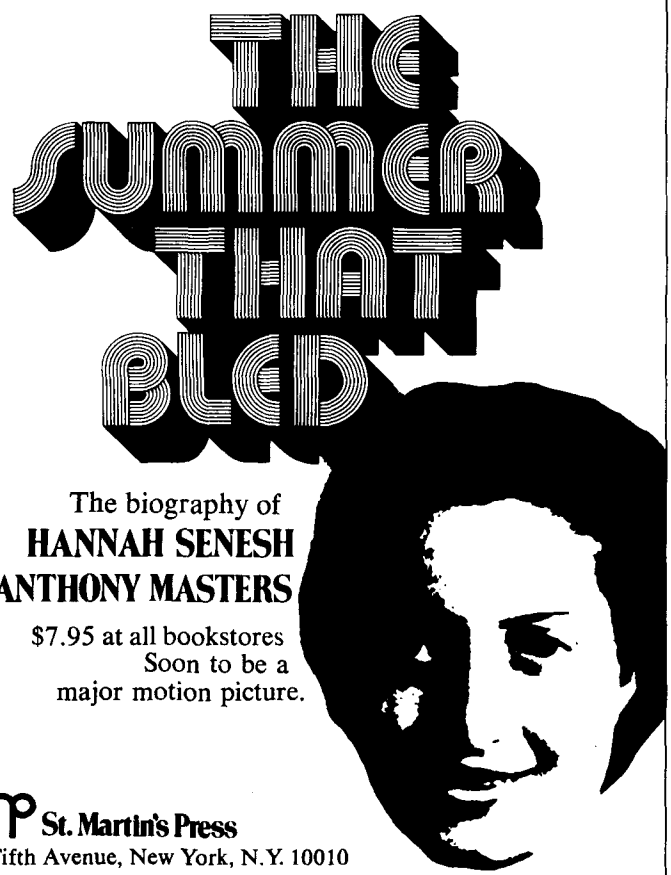

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Methodist minister's daughter from western New York State enjoyed herself extravagantly. There is a picture of her, taken in 1934 just after Germany expelled her for articles which condemned Hitler's anti-Semitism and for writing reports generally inimical to the interests of the Nazis. She carries a bouquet of American Beauty roses given her by the admiring corps of British and American correspondents who went to the station to see her off to Paris. The look on her face is that of a woman altogether pleased by her punishment: the same look she would have when the New York police prepared to escort her from a German-American Bund rally at Madison Square Garden, after she caused a disturbance by guffawing loudly in response to the anti-Semitic oratory of the Bund speakers. It is a look of smiling, self-confident aggression, of the sort that does not know embarrassment in the presence of its moral enemy.

It was that unembarrassed, aggressive quality which more than any other thing contributed to her fame and, in some quarters, to her notoriety. There were, after all, other journalists who saw the menace she saw in the Nazis, saw it just as early and earlier, notable among them Edgar Ansell Mowrer. But Dorothy Thompson had an extraordinary gift for drama, and the capacity to attract attention that eccentricity can have when it is informed with moral power. She had had an early schooling in religious values at the hands of her minister father, whom she adored; it was a schooling that was to stay with her for life and which would account in no small way for her tendency to seize upon the good and the evil in every issue with a dispatch that might have daunted more philosophically disposed minds. This was the major emotional consistency in an otherwise fluid temperament. Nothing in her three marriages, or her relations with either of the sexes, would ever be quite so consistent. Nor was she entirely dedicated to consistency in keeping the record of her own history straight. When it suited her, she embellished anecdotes of her travels in Europe, or of her presence at historic events; she was also wont, occasionally, to ignore the names of those who were there and to add, in their place, the names of notables she did not know at the time but who seemed, by the operation of her imaginative faculty, to be more fitting companions to the occasion.

While her professional success was in no way disturbed by the fact that she was always in and out of trouble, of a personal sort, and may even have been propelled by her grand emotional life, friends worried for her and kept track of her husbands and affairs to a degree that she herself did not share, inasmuch as she was at all times, including those of intense personal crisis, an exceedingly busy woman. Her whirlwind trips to Europe in search of news about the Viennese, or the Hungarians, or the status of the German population that lived in the Polish Corridor, soon angered even so sanguine a mate as Sinclair Lewis. But if she was disturbed by her husband's objections, it did not occur to her that plans to go off with a friend to root out the European news could be cancelled. From the first, she had always been a newshound, always dashing off wherever the action seemed imminent without the slightest hesitation. She could not be everywhere at once, no doubt to her regret:

> Dorothy's office was in her living room, where a steady stream of copy poured from her typewriter without the benefit of secretaries. To cover her large territory she had to rely on part-time local correspondents who were unaccustomed to digging for news beyond the periodic tidings that a wolf had eaten a thirteen-year-old child in Herzegovina.

World War II was her soul's adventure. Life would not be so good to her again, even if she did, finally, make a happy marriage and learn to make do with a certain domestic tranquility. But the restiveness in her was permanent, and not long after the war she took on an adversary that bested her at her own game in emotional strength. At the least propitious time in history, Dorothy Thompson chose to abandon a life-long commitment to Jewish causes in favor of a bitter anti-Zionism. Beginning with a somewhat tentative critique of Zionism, she soon occupied no less a position than the leadership of the American Friends of the Middle East, an unambiguously pro-Arab, anti-Zionist organization which counted among its members luminaries like Rabbi Elmer Berger and the Reverend Harry Emerson Fosdick. No one knew what precisely had caused her to change her mind about Zionism, which she had always strongly endorsed; it was said by one source that Jesus of Nazareth had appeared to her in a vision while she lay in a hospital in Jerusalem, "holding out his arms to the dispossessed Palestinian Arabs."

Whatever the reason, she was spurred to activity which soon caused her column to be dropped by the old New York *Post* (under T. O. Thackrey) and in time few outlets remained for her increasingly obsessive propaganda for the Arab cause. Her earlier hesitations about Israel had, no doubt, grown obsessive in part as a result of the concerted attacks upon her by Zionist groups in America. They called her an anti-Semite. It was hard for the minister's daughter, who had been taught by her father always to revere Jews for what they had given the world, and for the journalist who had in fact fought anti-Semitism in private and public life, to accept such a judgment.

But this time of her life saw the beginning of the end of her power either to convince or to be convinced about a wide range of political matters. It was not alone on the issue of the Jewish state that she floundered. She endorsed Adlai Stevenson with all her heart during his first campaign and ended up, just before the election, by formally endorsing Eisenhower in her column. This, as she reasoned, was because she wanted a change in political parties. "I think Stevenson will win, so I'm not jumping on a bandwagon. . . ." This prediction, as Mrs. Sanders notes, must have been based on a reading of tea leaves; there was scarcely a political observer on the scene who did not know what the results of that election would be.

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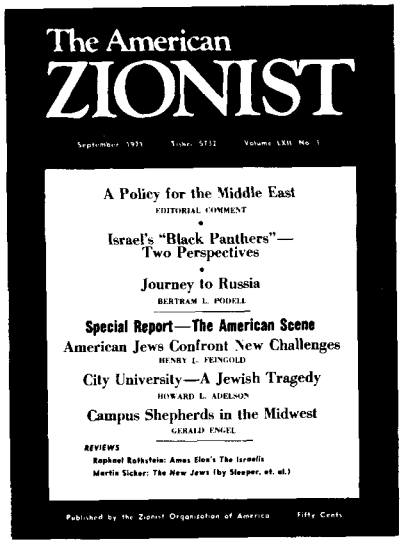

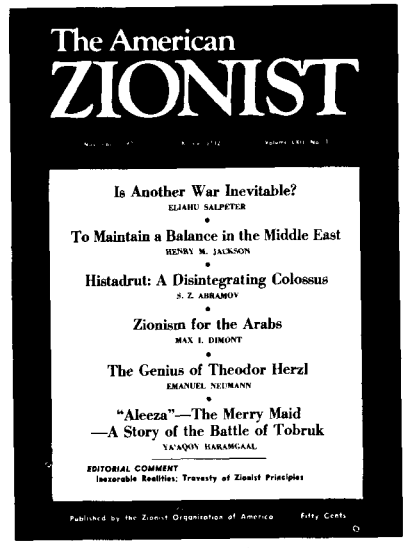

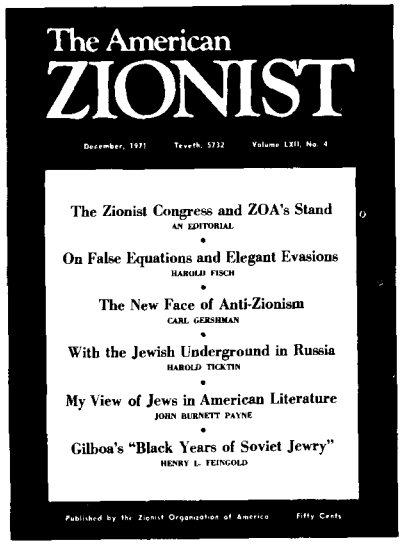
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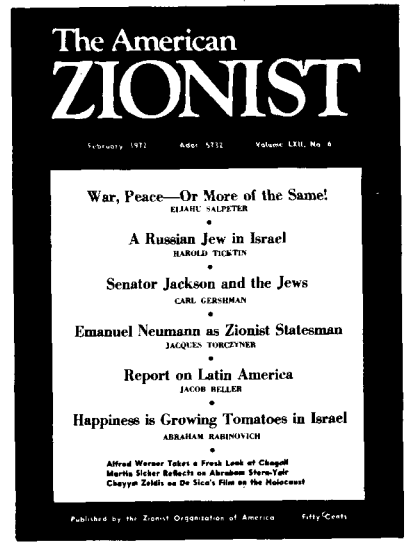
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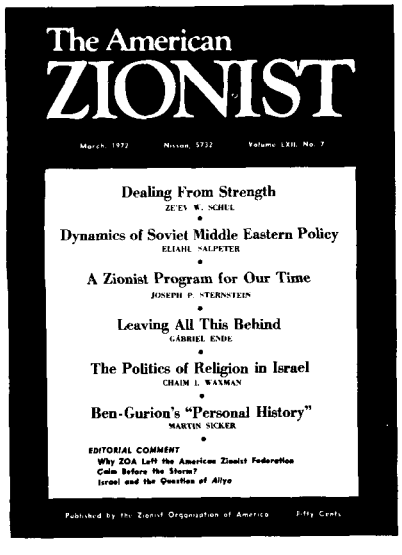

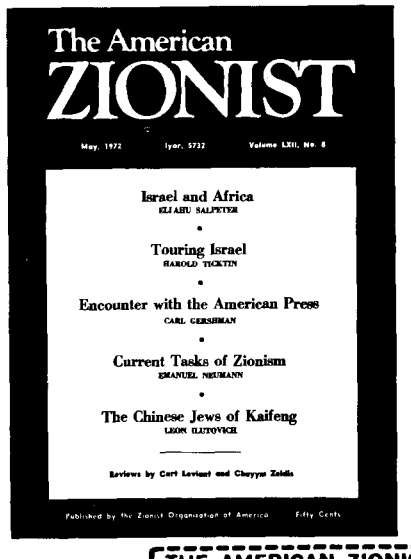

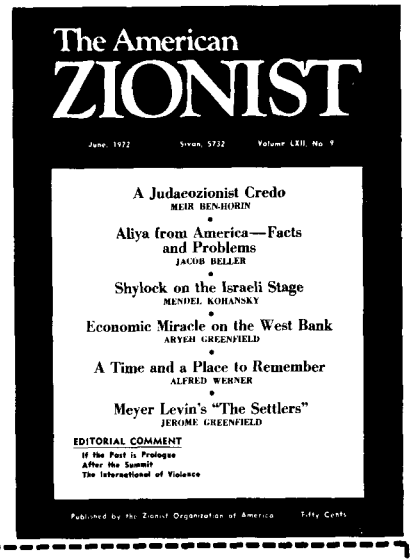

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Her political columns were still passionate, but they appeared ever more to be written by a person of several minds with regard to every issue. The editor of the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* wrote to her in 1949:

> Of late you have been giving the impression of one who is pawing the air. You rightly say that now is a very uncertain period in the world's history and that most dogmatic people are fools. But on the other hand we expect our writers to be a little more sure of themselves than our readers, and it seems to me you have wobbled around so much in recent years that I can't put my finger on you any more. . . .

She never published a reversal of her position on the Jewish state, but according to Meyer Weisgal, she did privately admit to having been in error on the subject. Of her once innumerable Jewish friends, Weisgal and a few others remained stalwarts; the rest left, repelled by the company she kept among the Arabists, or were driven away by the bitterness and the confusion of a woman to whom it was the greatest possible mystery that Jews should take offense, after 1945, at her attacks on Zionism, and on the cultural and religious identity it inspired among Jews living in America.

In part, she remained hurt and confused to the end. Her importance in the world had faded, somehow, before she knew it. Yet up to the time of her death in Lisbon, in 1960, she could still summon bursts of optimism, and make blandly cheerful plans for work that would never be written. Perhaps the most fitting epitaph to her life is Heywood Broun's comment from the time of her World War II heyday: "Dorothy is greater than Eliza because not only does she cross the ice but breaks it as she goes; moreover, she is her own bloodhound."

MARION SANDERS has written an entertaining and informative biography. Its chief weakness is a tone of urbane amusement at her subject, which runs somewhat too brightly throughout this work, a tendency that appears to be endemic nowadays among a certain school of writers who have evidently come to the conclusion that their function in writing consists in significant part in establishing their superiority to their subjects. It is difficult to take Dorothy Thompson's serious feelings seriously, when her biographer is chuckling over them at every turn. That aside, Mrs. Sanders has amassed much here by way of personal anecdote, correspondence, and journals, that evokes a fascinating figure and an equally fascinating era.

Leib Bronstein

TROTSKY AND THE JEWS. By JOSEPH NEDAVA. *Jewish Publication Society. 299 pp. $6.00.*

Reviewed by JOEL CARMICHAEL.

OF THE disproportionate numbers of Jewish revolutionaries who surged into European society in the wake of the Emancipation, only Leon Trotsky, né Leib Bronstein, achieved supreme eminence. Not only was he the co-founder, with Lenin, of the Soviet state, but his exceptional literary talents, in conjunction with his military role in the Russian civil war, created a reputation that still inflames the imagination of intellectuals everywhere. To be sure, his glittering career ended in tragedy, but this very failure made his name a symbol of "revolutionary purity" and insured his acclaim among disaffiliated radicals and the visionary young.

Trotsky's distinction alone would warrant his interest to students of Judaism and the Jews, but there are other reasons for that interest as well. The time surely has come to reassess the role of the Jews in the Russian Revolution. On the one hand, the "responsibility" of the Jews for the Bolshevik success, to say nothing of their attraction to revolutionary movements in general, has been wildly exaggerated by primitive anti-Semites; on the other hand, the Jewish participation in the Russian Revolution has been systematically played down by many Jews, especially by Jewish Marxists, for whom Jewishness as such is considered a piece of outworn and essentially "irrelevant" historical baggage.

Joseph Nedava, an Israeli historian, has recently attempted a revaluation of Trotsky with particular attention to the Jewish factor. He has collected many interesting sidelights and has, above all, discussed the Jewish relationship to the Russian Revolution with agreeable frankness. Yet his book falls disappointingly short of its aim.

Professor Nedava wishes to demonstrate that Trotsky, despite passionate disclaimers of Jewish identification, was far more involved with Jewish matters than he seemed to be. Unfortunately, Professor Nedava is hampered by the absence of substantial documentation for his thesis. (His statement that Trotsky wrote more about the "Jewish Question" than any other Marxist ideologist is disingenuous; the others wrote practically nothing.) Thus, from among Trotsky's voluminous writings he has retrieved a report on the Beilis "blood-libel" case of 1912, a description of a pogrom, a discussion of Zionism, etc. He has even found some indication that Trotsky attended the famous Zionist Congress of 1903 (where the question of Uganda was debated). All of this is undoubtedly interesting, even moving, yet it is no more than a footnote to a character that, in Professor Nedava's hands, remains stubbornly, and perhaps fatally, remote. For no matter how Trotsky may actually have felt about his Jewishness, what he explicitly wrote on the subject was, for the most part, banal and predictable, as in his routine anti-Zionism. (Though he did change his mind, after the advent of Hitler, on the question of the desirability of a "territorial" solution to the Jewish problem, there is really no proof whatsoever—as Professor Nedava is obliged to admit—that Trotsky ever became sympathetic to Zionism.)

The absence of genuine documentation, as well as the author's unfortunate tendency to enclose his discussion in one framework after another—the condition of the

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JOEL CARMICHAEL *has written extensively on Soviet affairs and on the Middle East. His* Trotsky *(a biography) is to be published later this year.*

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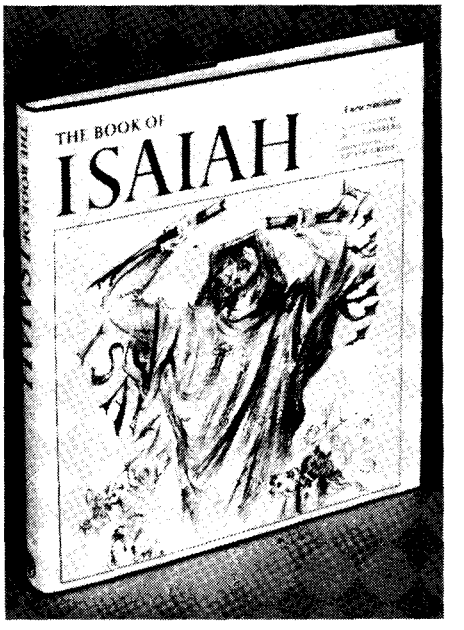
Jews in Russia, the perniciousness of Diaspora life, and so on—ultimately has a crippling effect. It becomes all too plain that Professor Nedava's wide-ranging sweep is really a form of padding. Probably it is his need for material that renders him particularly gullible with respect to the legends that Trotsky, like most celebrities, became encrusted by. Thus Nedava cites a memoir published in an Israeli newspaper a decade after Trotsky's murder; its author, recalling Jewish student life in southern Russia before the abortive revolution of 1905, mentions Trotsky as "head of the Social-Democratic party," who was "conducting revolutionary activities throughout the Ukraine from an apartment in Kiev." Since Trotsky had no organizational connection at all, this sounds like retrospective hagiography. The spuriousness of the memoir is accentuated by its curious conclusion: Trotsky abruptly abandoning his far-flung "revolutionary activities" and urging the students to follow Jabotinsky, the Zionist leader then engaged in Jewish self-defense!

Intent upon piling up external demonstrations of Trotsky's alleged Jewishness, Professor Nedava ignores Trotsky's inner agitation over his ancestry, surely of deeper moment. Granting Trotsky's "Jewish heart," what really demands exploration is the tension between it and Trotsky's Marxist head. Professor Nedava simply bypasses all this. Nor does he shed the requisite light on Soviet history as it affects his subject. His discussion of the so-called "Moscow Show Trials" of 1936-38, the culmination of Trotsky's Satanization, is particularly scanty. These charades eliminated all the Old Bolsheviks and served as a cover for the unpublicized extermination of more than eight million people, put to death as "Trotsky's agents," at a time when Trotsky himself was a helpless exile. Though he took incredible pains to demolish the "charges" made against him at the "trials," Trotsky was unable to explain the charades themselves or the monstrosities of the Stalin regime. For his part, Professor Nedava restricts himself to noting Trotsky's emphasis on the anti-Jewish element in the trials, really one of their minor features.

As I have noted, Nedava is on firmer ground when discussing Jewish participation in the Russian Revolution. He shows that the notion that the Jews were "behind" the Russian Revolution is a delusion of congenital anti-Semites; it is engaging to recall that the Bolsheviks were financed not by rich Jews, as the myth would have it, but by the German General Staff and Foreign Office, including Ludendorff, later to become a Hitler sympathizer. In fact, the Jews, as a community, were a negligible quantity in the Revolution. Since 80 per cent of them were "bourgeois," they were ruined economically. In a splendid quotation—from Jacob Maze, the Chief Rabbi of Moscow (1921)—Professor Nedava sums it up: "The Trotskys make the revolutions, and the Bronsteins pay the bills." But even this is an exaggeration. Jews figured negatively, so to speak, in the Russian Revolution by enabling the enemies of the Bolsheviks to stir up a powerful current of folk anti-Semitism; on the positive side, they were forced to defend the Soviet regime represented by the Bolsheviks during the subsequent Civil War precisely because there was no place for Jews in the camp of the White Guards.

Indeed, it is because Jews were essentially on the sidelines during the Revolution and the civil war —or rather, were the target of varying forces for different reasons— that Trotsky provides an archetypal paradigm for Jewry: he was a fanatic without a base. Shaped, no doubt, by his Jewish background, he was a classic representation too of the rupture that marked his generation of Jews— the revulsion against the values of the *shtetl* in favor of a set of universal ideas that were powered unmistakably, though distortedly, by a millennial religiosity. *Trotsky and the Jews* is a commendable, if defective, attempt to do justice to the entire vital theme suggested by the interaction between Jewry at large and the aspirations of its gifted deserters.

A New Translation



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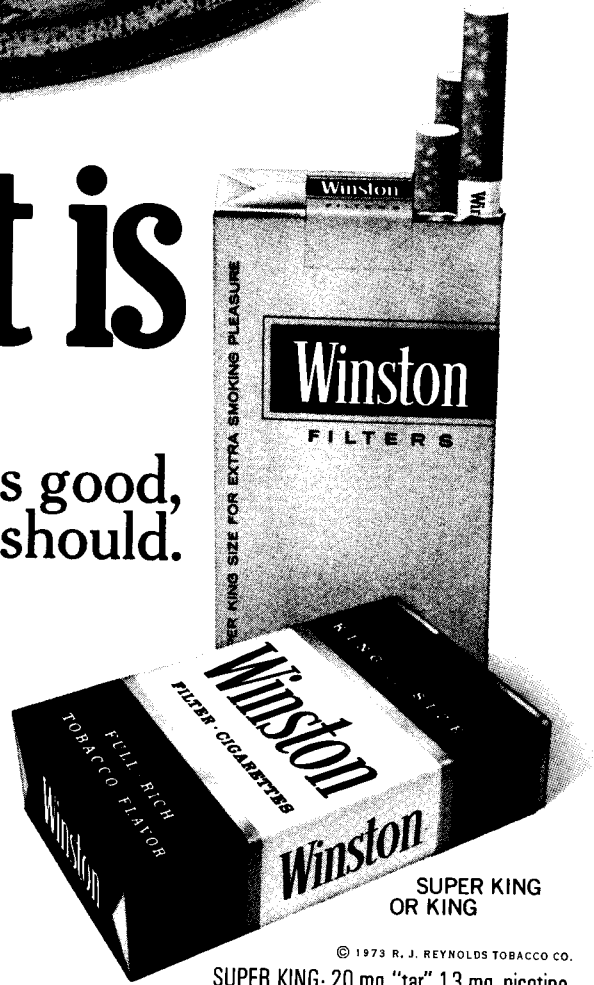

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OR KING

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SUPER KING: 20 mg. "tar", 1.3 mg. nicotine,
KING: 20 mg. "tar", 1.4 mg. nicotine, av. per cigarette, FTC Report FEB. '73.

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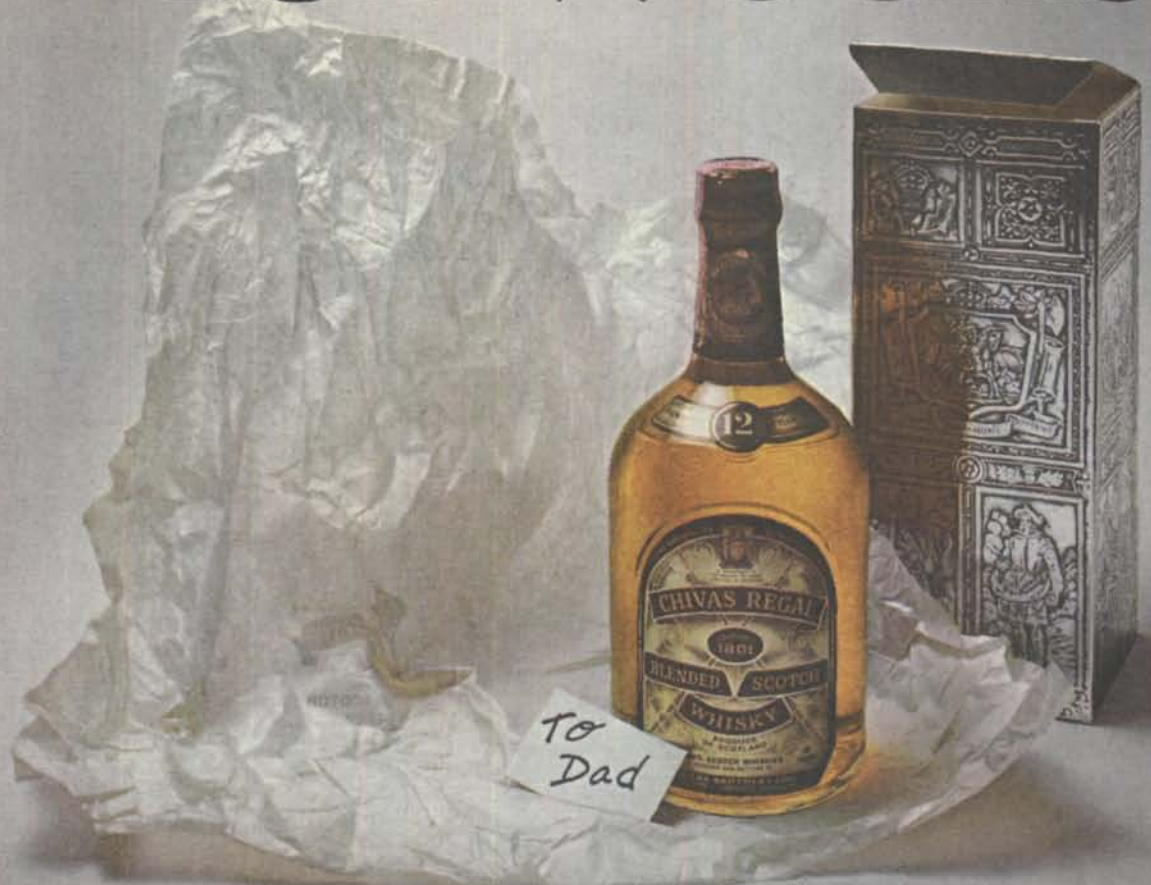
12 YEARS OLD WORLDWIDE · BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY · 86 PROOF · GENERAL WINE & SPIRITS CO., NEW YORK, N.Y.

Give him something he'll treasure for weeks.



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